

Ban on treating Israeli dental patients excludes 'humanitarian' cases

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The ban that the Jordanian Dentists Association issued against treating Israeli patients does not apply to "humanitarian and emergency" cases when doctors are ethically committed to offer help to those who need it regardless of any consideration and in compliance with medical principles, President of the Association Said Abu Meizer said Monday.

Dr. Abu Meizer told the Jordan Times the association's decision to forbid its members from treating Israeli patients applies only to what he termed "commercial cases" in which Israeli patients try to take advantage of the relatively cheap dental care charges in Jordan compared to Israel.

"In emergency and humanitarian cases, treatment is a right of all patients regardless of their nationality," Dr. Abu Meizer said, stressing that the association respects

the medical ethical and professional principles which oblige doctors to give treatment to any patient who needs it.

Israeli press reports said this week that hundreds of Israelis were seeking dental treatment in the Kingdom to benefit from the cheaper cost in Jordan.

Dr. Abu Meizer stressed that the decision came within the framework of the anti-normalisation campaign launched by the majority of Jordanian professional associations in light of continued "Israeli occupation of Arab lands in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon."

"Any treatment of (Israeli) patients whose situation is not urgent is part of the normalisation of ties (with Israel) which Jordanian associations reject," said Dr. Abu Meizer, who has been president of the 2,700-member grouping since May last year.

Dr. Abu Meizer, who described himself as an independent member of the nine-member board of the association,

stressed that the ban is in line with a March 15 decision of the general assembly of the association calling on all members to "fight normalisation with Israeli individuals and institutions."

He said the association will investigate any cases in which members treat Israeli patients to determine whether the treatment was of an emergency case or of one that aims to take advantage of the relatively cheap dental care costs in Jordan.

If it is proven that the case was not an emergency one, Dr. Abu Meizer said, the dentists involved will be referred to a disciplinary council which will apply punitive measures against him or her. These measures could include expulsion from the association, he said.

Most professional associations in the Kingdom are opposed to the normalisation of ties with the Jewish state before a comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict is found.



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker on Monday chairs a meeting of the Economic Consultative Council (AFP photo)

Government reaffirms commitment to tourism

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker on Monday emphasised the government's deep interest in supporting and promoting the role of the tourism sector and giving the private sector a free hand to help promote tourism in Jordan.

Addressing a meeting of the Economic Consultative Council (ECC), the prime minister said the government would provide all facilities for and contribute towards building the "basic and appropriate infrastructure needed for the development of this important sector" within a national strategy which the government is sponsoring to serve until the year 2010.

The Kingdom enjoys a very important location on the tourist map, Sharif Zeid said that a country with such notable sites like the ancient city of Petra, the Dead Sea and a good weather should

have a strategy appropriate and catering to tourism services and to attract as many Arab and foreign visitors as possible, he said.

The meeting listened to Minister of Tourism Abdullah Khatib reviewing the tourism sector and plans to promote it. The government was making plans to ensure that this sector would offer major contributions towards increasing national revenues, Mr. Khatib said.

Another topic reviewed by the council was the performance of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) and its development.

A statement following the meeting emphasised the role which the AFM plays in utilising local savings and in creating an opportune climate for investments in the Kingdom.

The statement underlined the government's keenness

on creating the means and the instruments and measures required for upgrading and boosting the AFM's operations in a manner that would best serve the national economy.

The government, acting in cooperation with the AFM's management, will seek to maximise the AFM's role and encourage investments through new legislation on investment companies and through modernising the AFM's law and organising trading in the companies shares, said the statement.

The council looked into means of highlighting the successful results of public share holding companies as a way to encourage further investments.

The council members include several ministers and representatives of the private sector in addition to prominent economists.

Journalists oppressed in self-rule areas — report

By Cathy King
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A full-scale assault by the Palestine Liberation Authority (PLA) appears to have been launched against the press in Gaza, an international rights organisation has claimed.

According to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the Palestinian police have detained, beaten and intimidated members of the press and raided their homes.

In a recent letter addressed to PNA President Yasser Arafat, the CPJ condemned the crackdown and expressed concern about reports of press censorship.

The letter, a copy of which was obtained by the Jordan Times, listed a series of arrests and beatings carried out on journalists, including a raid conducted by officers with the PNA's general intelligence of the offices of Al Watan, a pro-Hamas weekly newspaper.

Three of the newspaper's journalists were detained, while its deputy editor, Ghazi Hamad, suffered severe beating, local sources told the CPJ.

Mr. Hamad, along with Al Watan's editor-in-chief Sayed Abu Musameh and reporter Nafez Al Jib, were held for several hours, questioned and then released, the CPJ statement said.

The raid on Al Watan apparently followed its publication of a commentary which stated "there was no difference" between the PNA's crackdown on Hamas and Islamic Jihad and the repression under Israeli occupation.

The CPJ statement also maintained that the home of Taher Shriteb, publisher of the independent weekly Filastin, was raided and the personal guard unit of Mr. Arafat did not find him, they beat his brothers. On of them was hospitalised as result.

Three other journalists were said to have been arrested but subsequently released.

The CPJ said it remains "deeply concerned" by reports that an intelligence officer has been summoning journalists in Gaza for interrogation about their work.

"The CPJ is especially concerned by reports that these journalists were warned that they must submit their stories to his department for prior censorship or face arrest," the statement added.

Palestine Charge d'Affaires in Jordan Omar Khatib told the Jordan Times that he had been in consultation with the PNA official in charge of such matters and that he "assured us he did not detain any journalists in his capacity as a journalist. But there is a very small number who have been imprisoned, for their perpetration of acts clearly defined as being in contravention of the law."

According to Mr. Khatib's information, "all those proven innocent, whether journalists or others, were released immediately, upon the directives of President Arafat."

"The president has a great desire for the realisation of democracy and the protection of it under the umbrella of law and order," Mr. Khatib added.

Eban: Peace process will prevail and win in the end

WASHINGTON (USIA) — Abba Eban, the Israeli statesman, scholar, and former top diplomat, believes the Middle East peace process, despite fluctuations, will not be abandoned and will "win its way to an end."

In a public lecture at George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs, April 19, Mr. Eban discussed "opportunities and obstacles" to the current Middle East peace process. He said "irreversible facts are being created" and speculated that a Palestinian state might well become a reality in the future, arguing that in history "self-government has always led to statehood."

The Cambridge-educated Eban served as Israel's foreign minister from 1966 until 1974, at a critical period in Israel's history, which witnessed both the 1967 war and the October 1973 war.

Moreover, as a prominent member of the Labour Party which governs Israel now, he was the chairman of the Defense and Foreign Relations Committee of Israel's parliament, the Knesset from 1984-1988.

Mr. Eban remarked at the beginning of his speech that the end of the Cold War has produced a "fundamental reappraisal of the diplomatic routine" and a new era in which "odd couples" often share the same microphone.

He noted the cases of deKlerk-Mandela, IRA/Britain, and last but not least, Arafat-Rabin. He added that civil discourse, conciliation and the victory of rationality

have replaced a routine that frequently focused on "who is to blame" and "who began and who provoked" an aggression.

He noted that people nowadays are more interested in "quenching the flames" than in finding out who started them.

Mr. Eban, a prolific and versatile author who served also as Israel's minister of education and as ambassador to the United Nations and the United States for more than ten years, termed the peace process a "success story," primarily because it has so far produced "three acts of solemn contractual obligations" and an atmosphere of "discourse and civility."

Arguments and words, he elaborated, have replaced shells and bullets with both Jordan and Egypt and Israel and the Palestinians are engaged in discussions of the "serious and far-reaching issue of putting an end to violence." He also indicated that Israel and Syria are in the process of taking "decisions for reconciliation."

On the other hand, opponents of the peace process are attacking it not only in words but, regrettably, "by brutal acts." Alluding to the recent terrorist incidents by fundamentalist suicide bombers in Israel, he expressed forebodings about the outcome, and wondered, "How do you deter people who are not fearful of anything?" and "What is the use of contact with Hamas?"

He argued that the theory of deterrence will not work.

And pointing to the difficulties in the coming phase of the peace process, Eban said Israel is facing an ordeal and a dilemma: How can it extend the Palestinian self-rule jurisdiction with the present "outrages," a reference to the recent suicide terrorist attacks in Israel.

The Israeli statesman also observed that the peace process was more like a "chain" and its "first link" was the Palestinian decision. He noted that the Palestinians are the weakest of Israel's adversaries; yet it is they "who hold the key to legitimacy" of establishing contacts with Israel. He said that once the Israel-PLO contact was made, Israel has been able to make a formal peace with Jordan, establish ties with several Arab countries, and now has diplomatic presence in some 140 nations compared to about 50 prior to the peace with the Palestinians.

Mr. Eban said the European concept, and in particular the Benelux model, would work very well in the Middle East, particularly among Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians. He proposed one Dead Sea authority and a single authority for the two ports of Aqaba and Eilat.

He concluded by saying that the United States should sponsor such a community of states and should guarantee this mutuality of interests, predicting that "the ecumenical aspect of the Middle East will eventually triumph" and expressed hope that "separation" will not take root.

New committee aims at upgrading culture, arts

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Minister of Culture Samir Habashneh said Monday the formation of a National Committee for Culture and Arts by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker aims at enhancing the cultural environment in all parts of the Kingdom and upgrading the status of Jordanian writers and intellectuals.

"There isn't one theatre or a conference hall in most of the areas outside Amman," said Mr. Habashneh, the committee's vice-president.

"The committee's main task would be to lay the basic infrastructure needed for upgrading culture in all parts of the country."

Mr. Habashneh, also a member of the Lower House of Parliament, said the committee's 53 members would formulate a unified national vision for culture in the country. He said the committee would carry out studies on the situation of writers and would put the basic guidelines for improving their living conditions.

The committee is a combination of national, popular and official personalities who meet under one umbrella to draw up a cultural strategy or a vision to improve the situation of writers, and provide them with their basic needs, health insurance for example, he said.

In a statement issued on



Samir Habashneh

Sunday, the prime minister, the committee's president, said the National Committee for Culture and Arts aims at reviving national dialogue and enhancing cultural performance.

The formation of the committee, which comprises members from different social and political backgrounds, also aims at encouraging cultural and artistic creativity as well as increasing the support for writers, the statement said.

Members of the committee are: Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan Ali, Senator Laila Sharaf, former Minister of Trade Hamdi Tabba, former Minister of Finance Sami Gammo, Deputy Mohammad Daoudieh, Hind Nasser, publisher of Al Ra'i news-

paper Mabmond Kayed, President of the Chamber of Industry/Khaldoun Abu Hassan, President of the Chamber of Commerce Haidar Murad, columnist Tareq Masarweh, Secretary General of the Ministry of Culture Mohammad Naji Amareh, General Director of the National Library Osama Miqdadi, Ihsan Ramzi, President of Jordan Press Association Suleiman Qudah, President of the Jordanian Writers Association Ibrahim Abi, head of the Jordanian Artists Association Mohammad Barawi, Hazem Zou'bi, President of the Musicians Association Malek Madi, President of the Jordanian Librarians Association Yousef Qandeel, Zubair Khouri, Hosni Ayyesh, Zaha Mango and writer Munira Shuqair.

The committee also includes: Randa Sha'er, Suha Shoman, Suleiman Hawari, Yousef Ghawameh, Suleiman Tarawneh, Farouq Abu Jaber, Sameh Madanai, Husni Abu Ghaida, Abdullah Malki, Abdul Majid Na'aseb, Issam Salafi, Jalgis Hikmat, Abdullah Naqarab, Issam Ardeh, Jamal Abu Hamdan, Wasef Azar, Hassen Badran, Ahmad M. M. Al Ali, Talafesh, Haten Hawani, Suleiman Nuseirat, Salab Abu Hnoud, Ghaleb Hadidi, Abdul Rahman Tonqan, Fakhri Bilbeisi, Director of the Royal Cultural Centre Iyyad Qattan and Mohammad Younis Abbadi.

Oklahoma blast probe widens

(Continued from page 1)

'new world order' and the United Nations," Mr. Olson told AFP. "We cut our ties with him because we felt we were not going in the same direction."

Mr. Mattison said the two lawyers had met with McVeigh twice.

McVeigh, arrested less than two hours after the bombings on a traffic violation and then taken into federal custody Friday, faces court hearings Thursday on a federal bombing charge. Other charges are expected.

Mr. Panetta said McVeigh had not offered any information to investigators.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) said McVeigh, who turned 27 Sunday, was the first of two "John Doe" suspects in composite drawings circulated the day after the bombing, based on witnesses' descriptions of two men linked to a rented Ryder truck that was packed with fatal explosives.

The FBI says there could be more suspects.

On Sunday, the FBI burst into a small San Bernardino, California, home to grab David Iniguez, 23, on charges unrelated to the attack. Mr. Iniguez was questioned late into Sunday evening in connection with the bombing but was not considered a suspect.

A senior law enforcement official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said someone had claimed to recognise Mr. Iniguez from the "John Doe 2" sketch of a dark-haired, square-jawed man.

Mr. Iniguez deserted from Fort Riley last August, said a Pentagon spokesman. She said Iniguez was awaiting court-martial for possession and distribution of marijuana when he deserted.

Brothers Terry Lynn Nichols, 40, and James Douglas Nicholas, 41, were held as material witnesses but not charged. Terry Nicholas also served at Fort Riley.

The brothers are said to share far-right political views with McVeigh, whom the FBI described as enraged against the federal government for the fiery Waco, Texas, Branch Davidian cult debacle on April 19, 1993, which more than 80 cult members died.

As evidence mounts that home-grown extremists were to blame for the bombing, President Clinton is saying the blast shows that inflammatory rhetoric must not go unchallenged.

Americans should call to account "people who are out there trying to keep everybody torn up and upset all the time, purveying hate and implying at least with words that violence is all right," Mr. Clinton said on Sunday after leading a national day of mourning for victims of the Oklahoma City blast.

Mr. Clinton spoke out against practitioners of "incendiary talk" — an apparent reference to some of the right-wing radio talk show hosts who love to bash the government.

"We need to expose these people for what they are doing. This is wrong," he said. "You never know if there's some fragile person out there about to tip over the edge ... and all of a sudden there's a bunch of innocent babies in a day care centre dead."

White House spokeswoman Ginni Terzano said the president was not pointing the finger at any one group or any one person on any one constituency.

Denktash — fighter for equality

NICOSIA (R) — Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash, who won a third term as president on Saturday, has spent over three decades fighting for political equality for his community on the divided island of Cyprus.

"I take an oath that the Turkish-Cypriot community will never become a minority, nor will the island ever become Greek," he said in 1963, three years after inde-

pendence from Britain and two months before intercommunal fighting broke out.

He has stuck to his bards.

"Turkey will never allow Cyprus to become a Greek island," he said after voting on Saturday.

Mr. Denktash's tough stance in United Nations-sponsored talks on reunifying the island, split since the Turkish invasion in 1974, has

won him three presidential election campaigns.

But his success at home has not been matched abroad. Only Turkey recognises the self-proclaimed Turkish republic of north Cyprus, set up in 1983. Ankara maintains 30,000 troops there.

Numerous U.N.-sponsored talks over reunifying the island in a federation have foundered.

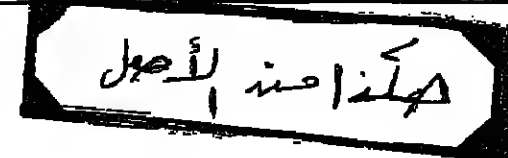
JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
14:00	Captain Planet
14:30	1 Witness Video
15:30	Road to Avoila
16:30	Tarzan
17:00	
18:00	Les Jumeaux Du Bout Du Monde
19:00	Conscience de la Science
19:30	News in French
19:45	Faut Pas Rever
20:00	The Bold and the Beautiful
20:30	The Nature of Things
20:30	Doston's
21:10	Jack and Ripper
22:00	News in English
22:30	Seaforth
00:59	Lonesome Dove
PRAYER TIMES	
04:28	Fajr
05:52	(Sunrise) Duha
12:34	Dhuhr
16:12	Asr
19:15	Maghrib
20:39	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Sweith, Tel. 810740	
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 625266	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 694195	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
Temperatures are expected to rise further with winds north-westerly moderate becoming easterly light in the afternoon. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman 11/26	
Aqaba 16/32	
Dawran 8/28	
Jordan Valley 14/31	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR	
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 23, Aqaba 30, Humidity readings: Amman 25 per cent, Aqaba 28 per cent.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Ghazi Sami Abdullah	884286
Dr. Yousef Sammour	662254
Dr. Nasser Ibrahim	662935
Dr. Khalid Klob	816115
Firadous pharmacy	661912
Al Asema pharmacy	670255
Natrouth pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yaacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmiciani pharmacy	637660
Natrouth pharmacy	623672
Najib pharmacy	647632
IRBID:	
Dr. Ali Al Shoaqir	246140
Aqaba pharmacy	(—)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Mufid Dhamrah	982522
Khalif pharmacy	985417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police 192	621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	617101
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	63021
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	
(directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	
Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR	
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport	08-53200
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussien Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn	
Aklich Maternity, J. Amn	6442816
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Malhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmiciani	6641714
Shmiciani Hospital	669131
Al-Mushtaq Hospital	845845
The Islamic, Abdali	6661217
Al-Ahli, Abdali	6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen	777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	775111/26
Army, Marka	891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital	688100
Amal Hospital	674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery	865199
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)905640
Al Hikam Modern Hospital	(09)986732
IRBID:	
Princess Beama Hospital	(02)75555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)727275
St. Al Nafes Hospital	(02)247100
AMARA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	(03)314111

17:50	Cairo (RJ)
18:30	Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
04:20	Vienna (OS)
14:20	Rome (AZ)
14:55	Munich (YP)
21:00	Aden (DY)
21:20	Beirut (ME)
23:20	Amsterdam (KL)
00:55	Bucharest (RO)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ)	
Flights (Terminal 1)	
08:40	Aqaba (RJ)
09:15	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:00	Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:05	Vienna, Brussels (RJ)
(RJ)	
12:35	Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
12:55	Paris (RJ)
13:30	Frankfurt (RJ)
13:40	London (RJ)
13:45	Cairo (RJ)
21:30	Jeddah (RJ)
22:25	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
23:10	
Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)	
23:59	Larnaca (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
06:30	Damascus, Paris (AF)
13:40	Damascus, Vienna (OS)
15:20	Damascus (AZ)
15:55	Sharjah, Munich (YP)
22:00	Aden (DY)
HIJAZ RAILWAY	
TRAIN	
Dep. Amman	8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus	5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus	
Arr. Amman	7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman	5:00 p.m. every Sunday
MARKET PRICES	
Up/Down price in fils per kg.	
Apple	700/500
Banana	680
Banana (Mukammur)	620
Cabbage	140/70
Carrot	180/100
Cauliflower	160/120
Cucumbers (large)	80/50
Cucumbers (small)	170/90
Eggplant	250/150
Garlic	400/270
Grape Leaves	900/800
Green beans	240/140
Lemon	650/300
Mint (large)	80/60
Mint (small)	220/100
Mulukhia	300/250
Onion (dry)	170/100
Orange	540/400
Potato	450/350
Pepper (hot)	450/300
Pepper (sweet)	400/250
Spinach	280/200
Soy Beans	260/180
Tomato	140/80



N. Korea hints it will reopen nuclear talks with U.S.

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea strongly indicated Monday that it will return to the negotiating table rather than turn its back to restart its nuclear programme, but said Washington should first meet certain "conditions."

"We attach great importance to dialogue with the United States and can have a talk," a North Korean U.N. official said in a telephone interview with the South's Yonhap News Agency.

It was the first official expression of North Korea's willingness to accept a U.S. suggestion for new talks to be held in Geneva, upgraded from failed working-level negotiations in Berlin.

But the official involved in the U.S.-North Korea talks called on Washington to come up with a compromise deal before reopening the talks, Yonhap said in a dispatch from Washington.

He stressed that new talks could be held "soon" if "various conditions should be met," Yonhap said, adding Washington hopes to hold the talks in the first week of May.

"The Americans had previously asked us to meet certain conditions. The situation has changed over the year, so we now should follow the precedent they set," he told Yonhap.

The Berlin talks broke down over the North's refusal

to accept safer reactors from its bitter rival South Korea under the October 1994 Geneva agreement, which defused a dragging crisis on the volatile Korean peninsula.

On Saturday, North Korea said it would take "decisive measures" on the offer of fresh talks made by U.S. Ambassador-at-large Robert Gallucci after the breakdown of technical talks in the German capital Thursday.

With no indication of when Pyongyang would communicate its decision to Washington, the North warned that the Korean peninsula might face a new crisis.

"We are not only ready for war but also for dialogue," said a North Korean radio commentary monitored in Seoul Monday.

The North had threatened to reactivate a reactor, which U.S. experts say is capable of producing enough weapons-grade plutonium to make bombs, if the April 21 target date passed with no reactor changeover contract.

But Mr. Gallucci said he was ready to open talks to save the Geneva accord as long as North Korea did not carry out its threat.

"After last week's failed talks, North Korea's chief negotiator Kim Jong-U said he was returning home for consultations on what he called 'unrealistic and un-

reasonable" demands by the U.S. side that Pyongyang accept the South Korean-made light-water reactors (LWRs).

In detailing his offer, however, Mr. Gallucci continued to insist that South Korea play a central role in providing the two 1,000-megawatt LWRs.

Several formulas have been suggested to overcome the North's refusal to accept reactors from its bitter rival in the South, including the appointment of an American company to head a construction consortium.

Meanwhile, the head of a Polish peacekeeping team expelled from North Korea in February arrived in the South Monday to attend a regular peace monitors' meeting, the Foreign Ministry said.

A ministry spokesman said Major General Krystof Owczarek would attend the annual meeting here of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC), which is charged with monitoring the truce that ended 1950-53 Korean War.

North Korea, which is trying to have the truce mechanism replaced with a new peace treaty, expelled the Polish team from their camp the truce village of Panmunjom which straddles the Demilitarized Zone in February.

But the Polish government said subsequently that despite the expulsion it would remain a member of the NNSC.

A ministry spokesman said that during his visit here Gen. Owczarek would discuss with Swedish and Swiss delegates ways to operate the now-emancipated NNSC.

"He will participate in the NNSC meeting, but the main purpose of his visit is to find out the possibilities practical ways of continued cooperation with the NNSC. He will be seeing a lot of people," a Polish embassy spokesman told AFP.

The Swedish and Swiss monitor the truce from the South side of the DMZ, but the explosion of the Poles after the non-replacement of the contingent from the former Czechoslovakia, has left a vacuum on the North side.

The United Nations Command which signed the truce with North Korea and the Chinese People's Volunteer Army in July of 1953, has warned that the breakdown of the mechanism without a new treaty in its place is fraught with danger.

North Korea argues that it should sign a new treaty with the United States, while Washington, with China's support, says South Korea must be involved in any new treaty.



"Science and technology minister" Hideo Murai (right) of the Aum Supreme Truth cult, suspected in last month's deadly sarin gas attack on Tokyo's subway system, is stabbed by a knife-wielding man in front of Aum's Tokyo headquarters (AFP photo)

'Sarin mishap may have killed cult followers'

TOKYO (AFP) — An accident involving the nerve gas Sarin at the main commune of the doomsday cult Aum Supreme Truth may have killed several members last year, a newspaper report said Monday.

Police detected a sarin byproduct in soil at the compound and seized a lengthy internal report on the accident when they were called in by local residents in July after complaints of foul smells coming from the commune, the Yomiuri newspaper said.

The report showed that the cult closed two wells at the commune after detecting a sarin derivative, methylphosphoric acid monoisopropyl, inside them, according to the newspaper's evening editions.

It also logged the distribution of an antidote to Sarin to followers immediately after the accident at the commune at the foot of Mount Fuji.

Police officials were quoted by Yomiuri as saying that "there was the possibility that many followers fell victim to the accident, resulting in deaths."

Aum has repeatedly denied producing sarin or any involvement in the March 20 attack on the Tokyo subway which killed 12 people and injured 5,500 others after they inhaled the gas.

Police have found a huge stockpile of chemicals, suitable for making sarin, and a hidden laboratory at the commune.

But they have yet to announce the discovery of conclusive evidence to link the subway massacre with the cult which teaches the need to prepare to rebuild the world after an apocalyptic world war in 1997.

Police arrested a senior chemist of Japan's Aum Supreme Truth cult Monday following the overnight murder of its science chief, which could hamper the investigation into the Tokyo subway nerve-gas attack.

Hideo Murai died in hospital early Monday from excessive bleeding after being stabbed in the abdomen by a self-avowed right-winger Sunday night before television cameras outside Aum's

Tokyo head office.

Murai, 36, a trained astrophysicist, could have shed light on the subway massacre as the "science and technology minister" of the self-contained Aum regime which is suspected of producing the Nazi-invented Sarin nerve gas.

But hours later, another sect member — Shigeyuki Hasegawa — was picked up in Shizuoka, west of Tokyo, on charges of stocking up 42,000 litres (10,920 gallons) of glycerol and other chemicals, which could be used to illegally produce explosives.

Mr. Hasegawa, a 26-year-old pharmacology graduate, is registered as president of Aum's two chemical companies and is suspected of procuring materials for sarin, the gas used in the March 20 subway attack which killed 12 and injured 5,500.

Masami Tsuchiya, 30, who allegedly heads a team of about 12 Aum chemical specialists, was also being hunted by police on suspicion of being a key player in Sarin production.

U.N. urges cooperation from NAM

BANDUNG, Indonesia (AFP) — U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali made an impassioned plea Monday to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), meeting here, to work within the world body.

"As the world witnesses basic changes in international relations, the NAM faces the challenge of adapting to the changed world situation," Dr. Ghali told delegates here.

"It is particularly important for the NAM to work, within the framework of the U.N., towards the creation, through effective and constant cooperation, of a new system of international relations consistent with the aspirations and hopes of the peoples of the NAM," he said.

Dr. Ghali was speaking at a ceremony commemorating the Asia-Africa conference here in 1955 at which 29 nations gathered to call for decolonisation and world peace in the early years of the cold war.

Held in the original Gedung Merdeka, or Freedom Building, in this hilltown 200 kilometres southeast of the capital Jakarta, the commemoration began with a re-enactment of the original 100-metre walk by delegates from the historic Savoy Hotel to the hall.

While photographers show the original stroll down a spacious street, the atmosphere of the recreation was lost in a modern crush of dozens of television camera-

men and photographers. Later, speakers from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America recalled how vital the Bandung Conference was for the formation in 1961 of the NAM by 25 countries.

The ceremony also marked the opening of the meeting of the coordinating bureau of the NAM, which following the weekend addition of Eritrea, now has 112 members.

In his address NAM chairman, Indonesia's President Suharto, said the movement had contributed to a number of worthy causes including eradicating colonialism, and was in the vanguard against institutionalised racism such as apartheid and a champion of disarmament.

Major set to heal rift in his party

LONDON (R) — Prime Minister John Major may be set to heal a rift in his Conservative Party by bringing back into the fold nine MPs whose rebellion has robbed him of an overall majority in parliament, a leading rebel said Monday.

Nicholas Budgen, one of the MPs expelled from the party in November in a row over the European Union, said he knew peace talks had taken place.

"I don't know about the details. I know there have been discussions over the weekend," he told BBC Radio.

Mr. Budgen and seven other Conservative MPs were sacked for refusing to vote in favour of a parliamentary motion to increase payments by Britain to the EU budget.

Japanese ruling parties beaten as independents gain momentum

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's ruling parties lost heavily in the second round of local elections, amid growing apathy or even repulsion and apathy towards the current politics, analysts said Monday.

Independent candidates gained further momentum in the mayoral and city assembly polls Sunday following upset wins by independent candidates in the Tokyo and Osaka gubernatorial elec-

tions on April 9. "The results from the elections show how seriously people distrust the existing politics and parties," said Takashi Saito, a political professor at Gakushuin University.

"Such a tendency is likely to continue in not only local polls but also parliamentary level," Mr. Saito said. "If existing parties fail to take immediate action to gain support, they are going to make an irreparable error."

Turnout at the polls was the lowest ever. Voting rates in mayoral elections fell by 6.6 percentage points to 60 per cent and those in municipal assemblies were down 5.1 points to 60.3 per cent.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the largest single party in parliament and in the coalition government, won only 968 seats, a record low, in municipal assemblies, 24 per cent down from the previous election in 1991.

Japan boosts security for nuclear ship arrival

MUTSU OGAWARA, Japan (R) — Nuclear activists converged on this port Monday and flights in the area were banned on the eve of the arrival of a British ship carrying a controversial cargo of radioactive waste.

Demonstrators say the waste is so dangerous that just touching it is enough to kill you.

The Pacific Pintail, carrying 14 tonnes of waste from plutonium reprocessing in France, was expected to sail into this port on the northern tip of Japan's main Honshu Island at dawn Tuesday.

About 1,000 demonstrators have camped in the area for several days awaiting the end of the ship's two-month voyage from Cherbourg. The environmental group Greenpeace says this is the most dangerous shipment ever made.

Greenpeace said it regarded the cargo as so dangerous that it did not plan any dramatic high-seas confrontation with the Pacific

Pintail because of the risk of an accident.

But Greenpeace said rubber dinghies flying anti-nuclear slogans would escort the ship to dock and that there would be demonstrations on land.

As a safety precaution, the Transport Ministry has banned aircraft from flying in the skies above the port until the Pacific Pintail docks. The whole port area was cordoned off.

Hundreds of riot police were already on duty at the port area where the cargo will be unloaded. One protester eluded the cordon and tied himself to a 20 metre high crane which will be used to unload the cargo. He was freed by police after several hours and arrested.

Dozens of protesters including Buddhist monks marched through the village, holding up banners saying: "No high-level nuclear waste. Stop bringing in nuclear waste."

Police also arrested several protesters who tried to force their way into the port through the main gate.

"This port is going to be under tight security. We are ready to deal with any radical acts," a police spokesman said.

Authorities have kept secret the ship's arrival time but protesters believe it could berth at dawn, possibly around 6.30 a.m. (2130 GMT Monday).

"It depends on how many activists there are and what kind of activities they plan," the spokesman said.

The toxic waste is encased in 28 stainless steel canisters and mixed with glass. They are to be stored for about 50 years in a special storage facility in Rokkasho, near this port, and then buried underground.

The waste includes radioactive material like strontium, which has a half-life of several million years. One minute of exposure at a

distance of one metre would be lethal, Greenpeace said in a statement.

"You can kill yourself by simply touching it," said nuclear expert Jinzaburo Takagi, who heads Japan's biggest anti-nuclear group.

"The waste is more radioactive than what was released in the 1985 Chernobyl nuclear explosion," he said. The waste is a by-product of Japan's programme to reprocess its spent nuclear fuel into plutonium at a plant in France.

The first shipment of plutonium, which is to be used in Japan's fast breeder power-generating reactors, was in 1992.

This is the first time that waste from the programme has been brought back to Japan.

Similar voyages, once or twice a year, will carry a total of 3,000 tonnes of waste back to Japan for burial over the coming years.

Four Weddings scoops awards in London

LONDON (R) — The hit film *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, which catapulted its star Hugh Grant to stardom, won five awards at the British film awards Sunday pipping Oscar winner *Sunday in the Park with George*. The hit comedy, which has made more than £170 million (\$272.5 million) at the box office, charts the romances and marriages of a group of young middle-class Britons. At the BAFTA ceremonies it won the Award for Best Film, the David Lean Award for Best Achievement in Direction for director Mike Newell, best actor for Grant, best supporting actress for Kristin Scott Thomas, and a special prize for Most Popular Film. American actress Susan Sarandon took the prize for best actress for her role in *The Client*. Britain's Joanna Lumley received the best comedy performance for her role in *Absolutely Fabulous*. The *Haw Weldon* Award for the Best Arts Programme went to a moving interview with the late playwright Dennis Potter in which he spoke of his fight against cancer. During the interview he took morphine to counter his pain. Film stars Tony Curtis, Raquel Welch, Michael Caine, Greta Scacchi, Elle McPherson, Gina Lollobrigida, Joan Collins and John Travolta were amongst the guests at what have been dubbed the British Oscars held at London's Palladium Theatre.

Britain's youth going to pot

LONDON (R) — The number of 15 and 16-year-old British boys who have smoked cannabis has trebled in the past three years and one third now say they have used the illegal drug, a nationwide survey has shown. More than 48,000 children aged between 11 and 16 were questioned by researchers from Exeter University for a BBC television programme. They found 32.9 per cent of boys aged 15 and 16, and 27.3 per cent of girls admitted having smoked cannabis in 1994.

Scientists develop Himalayan contraceptive

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian scientists have developed a herbal contraceptive from a plant that grows in the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains, a newspaper reported. The Pioneer said the pippalyadi yoga plant has been used by native tribes in rural areas but mainstream society has now known of its qualities. Ranjit Roy Chaudhury, chairman of the government's Interagency Research Committee which tested the plant, told the daily the oral contraceptive would be low priced and available to women by Aug. 15. "There will be no side effects," he said, without making clear how effective the plant had been found to be.

The rewards of literary success...

LONDON (R) — Writing novels appears to be one of the best ways of making money for British women, according to a survey. Four of the top six earners were novelists, headed by Barbara Taylor Bradford who earned £11.93 million (\$19.12 million) in the past 12 months, according to the survey in the Mail On Sunday newspaper. Second in the list was actress Angela Lansbury followed by Chinese-born Jung Chang, author of worldwide best-seller *Wild Swans*, and Hollywood-based writer Jackie Collins.

Police raid straying husband after ID mix-up

LONDON (AFP) — Armed police raided a married man enjoying a night with his mistress after hotel staff mistook him for an escaped murderer. Edinburgh police said the 31-year-old Scot booked a room in a luxury hotel there. On arriving, he registered under a false name in an effort to be discreet. But his chosen alias, Scott Anderson, turned out to be the real name of a dangerous murderer whom British police had been hunting for a month. The real Anderson was even the "star" of the previous week's *Crimewatch*, a BBC television programme which publicises criminal investigations and makes public appeals for witnesses.



Indigenous residents of San Andres Larrainzar, in the Mexican state of Chiapas, look on as military policemen prepare to form a security cordon around the building where Mexican government officials and Zapatista rebels are holding the second consecutive day of peace talks (AFP photo)

Mexico peace talks suspended

SAN ANDRES LARRAINZAR, Mexico (R) — Mexico's government and Maya Indian rebels suspending peace talks Sunday after arguing over rival proposals to prevent fresh fighting in the southern state of Chiapas.

Both sides swapped bitter accusations and criticisms at the end of their two-day meeting although they said they would sit down again on May 12 once leaders of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) consult their rank and file members and supporters on the government's latest proposals.

But Zapatista leaders said they were not satisfied with those proposals, under which the federal army would reduce its presence in Chiapas after the guerrillas assemble their forces in three zones for their later demobilisation.

"We feel that the government delegates do not want to talk about peace, they just want our surrender," Zapatista Commander "Tacho" told reporters. "The EZLN did not come here to surrender, it came looking for the path of dialogue."

The Zapatistas have proposed that both sides pledge to end all offensive military operations while talks continue

and that the army withdraw from positions it seized in a successful sweep through rebel-held, jungle territory in February.

Government officials later said the rebel proposal offered little that was new and was an attempt to get something for nothing. "The EZLN is in what it calls 'mountain positions' because it has placed in that situation and not because of its will," government negotiator Javier Centeno told reporters.

He said the government offer was "complete and realistic" and indicated that social and political reforms for Chiapas and the Zapatistas' conversion into a legal political force would be settled in later talks.

The Zapatistas rose up in arms on New Year's Day 1994 to demand greater democracy and indigenous rights. More than 150 people died in the early days of the rebellion but there has been little fighting since.

The last peace talks, in March 1994, ended in failure after Zapatista supporters rejected a government peace plan. But their negotiating strength suffered when the army's February offensive drastically changed the milit-

ary balance of power. Rather than strike back, the rebels instead fled deep into the jungle. They avoided a bloodbath and avoided the capture of military leader Subcomandante Marcos, but came to the weekend's talks in a significantly weaker position.

This round of talks was also supposed to focus on setting the formal agenda for the peace process, but the issue was not discussed. Both sides are expected to clash over the agenda, as the Zapatistas want national democratic reforms included, while the government wants to limit any peace deal to Chiapas.

"Peace and development in Chiapas are the final objectives of the federal government in this negotiation," Marco Antonio Bernal, the government's chief negotiator, said earlier.

Rebel Commander "David," who led the eight Zapatista chiefs at the talks, said Chiapas' indigenous people had been lied to for decades and wanted real changes from the peace process. "No promises, or words, because we have had more than enough of words written on paper."

U.S. Report: More children living without fathers

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of American children living without fathers has quadrupled since 1950, and the number of young men earning salaries below the poverty line has risen even faster, said a private study released Monday.

Twenty-four per cent of U.S. children lived in mother-only families in 1994, according to the sixth Annual Kids Count Data Book, produced by Annie E. Casey Foundation. That is a sharp increase from the 6 per cent who were living without fathers 45 years ago, the foundation said.

Researchers, while not excusing fathers who abandoned their families, blamed the trend partly on unemployment and declining wages.

Since 1972, the median income of all men aged 25 to 34 has fallen by 26 per cent in inflation-adjusted dollars, the study said.

The percentage of men 25 to 34 with incomes below the poverty level for a family of four more than doubled — increasing from 14 per cent to 32 per cent in 24 years, the foundation said.

In 1993, nearly half of all black and Latino men in that age group did not earn enough to lift a family of four out of poverty, the study said.

"The simple truth is that disadvantaged young men who do not have the education, skills or opportunity to succeed in today's economy are not prepared to contribute as providers, protectors and mentors to their chil-

dren," said Douglas W. Nelson, the foundation's executive director.

Census Bureau data show that more 19 million youngsters live without fathers, the foundation said. One-quarter of those children live in neighbourhoods where more than half of all families lack fathers.

Children growing up fatherless are five times more likely to be poor, the study said. They also are twice as likely to drop out of high school and significantly more likely to end up in foster care, group homes and juvenile justice facilities.

To reverse the trend, Mr. Nelson suggested putting a higher priority on improving education for poor and minority male students, reforming welfare, and re-

doubling efforts to reduce the unemployment rate.

Doug Besharov, a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank, said the problem may have less to do with economics than cultural changes.

During the great depression, the U.S. birthrate dropped, he said.

"Today, we have come to the opposition conclusion, that poverty shouldn't be an obstacle to having as many children as you might want," Mr. Besharov said. "I'm not the kind of person who says poor people shouldn't have kids. But it does mean that if you're going to have a child, you have an obligation to support and try to be supportive of that child, and that's not happening."

Bosnian Serbs fire mortars from weapons collection point

Karadzic, Mladic targetted in war crimes probe

SARAJEVO (AFP) — Bosnian Serb forces fired four 120 mm mortars from a U.N. weapons collection point outside Sarajevo overnight, despite four warning shots from the United Nations telling them to stop, a U.N. official said Monday.

Shortly after midnight Sunday Bosnian Serb forces fired the rounds from heavy guns stored at the Ukrainian-controlled collection point at Hridza.

The U.N. commander of the base ordered them to stop and fired four warning shots, the U.N. officials said.

The direction of the Serb mortars was not known, a U.N. spokesman added.

The Serbs under U.N. rules have the right to maintain and "train" with weapons stored at the collection points but not to use them for offensive action.

U.N. Protection Force spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Gary Coward said the number of firing incidents increased significantly around Bosnia Sunday.

Sunday was the Serb Orthodox Easter and firing incidents regularly rise during particular religious celebrations.

Fighting remained active around the strategically important Posavina Corridor, linking Serb-held territories in the northeast and northwest and in the Majevica Hills, Col. Coward said.

Unconfirmed reports suggested that the Bosnian government army had launched an infantry attack south of

Brcko in the Posavina Corridor but there was no indication of progress, Col. Coward added.

Sarajevo Radio said meanwhile that two people were wounded by Bosnian Serb mortar fire in the Butmir suburb of Sarajevo early Monday.

On Sunday, a French U.N. soldier injured his right foot in Butmir when entered a house while on a routine patrol and triggered a booby-trap device.

The escalation in fighting in Bosnia in recent weeks follows the effective breakdown of a four-month ceasefire due to officially run out at the end of the month.

The international community is pressing both warring parties to agree a new truce but both Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian government over the weekend refused to consider any extension.

In the Hague, the prosecutor of the U.N. war crimes tribunal announced Monday he was investigating Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and his military commander General Ratko Mladic on suspicion of war crimes.

U.N. officials immediately expressed concern at the possible impact of the decision on the fragile peace process.

A communique issued by prosecutor Richard Goldstone said he plans to ask the Bosnian government to suspend its own investigation of both leaders and turn the case over the International

Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

"The Trials Chambers of the International Tribunal will convene on May 9 and 10 to consider two applications for deferral filed on Friday, April 21 by the prosecutor," the communique said. "Both applications relate to investigations and criminal proceedings being conducted by the Republic of Bosnia."

The communique said the probes in Bosnia "relate to matters that are closely linked to investigations currently being conducted by the prosecutor."

"Accordingly, the prosecutor seeks to take over the Bosnian government investigations and to have the result of its inquiries passed to his office."

Also targeted in the probe are several Bosnian Croats, the communique said.

A spokesman earlier stressed that the move under suspicion had not been formally charged.

Mr. Goldstone's statement said his team was investigating the responsibility of the Serb leadership in Pale, notably Mr. Karadzic and Gen. Mladic but also the former political head of their special police, Mico Stanisic, relating to allegations of genocide, offences against civilians and the destruction of cultural and historical monuments.

The tribunal was examining the issue of their individual responsibility for genocide, murder, rape, torture and forced deportations from many areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina, focussing on events at Prijedor and Bosanski Samac in the north of the country, Mr. Goldstone said.

A further probe involves crimes allegedly committed by Bosnian Croat forces between September 1992 and June 1993 in the Lasva River valley in central Bosnia that saw the widespread killing of Bosnian civilians and the destruction of Bosnian villages.

Mr. Goldstone said it was essential that Bosnian judicial procedures did not interfere with his own enquiries or his ability to prosecute before the international tribunal, given the principle that a person should not be tried twice for the same crime.

He said the Bosnian government would not be opposing the deferral applications. The announcement of an investigation into the criminal responsibility of the separatist Serb leadership came as Dushko Tadic, a Serb charged with complicity in murder and genocide, was transferred from Munich, Germany, to the Hague to be tried by the international tribunal.

Mr. Tadic is suspected of killing at least 32 people and torturing 61 others at the notorious Omarska camp, near Prijedor in northwestern Bosnia. He is one of 22 Bosnian Serbs charged by the tribunal since it was formed under a U.N. Security Council resolution in May 1993.

Rwanda forces rush to disperse Hutus after mayhem

KIGALI (R) — Rwanda government forces rushed Monday to disperse displaced Hutus back to their homes after thousands were slaughtered over the weekend in the southwestern camp of Kibeho.

Most of the corpses had been buried but a row was being dug out to show how many Hutu men, women, and children were shot, blown up by mortars, bayoneted or trampled to death when Tutsi soldiers of the Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) opened fire at Kibeho Saturday.

U.N. officials initially estimated up to 8,000 were killed.

"Our people manually counted over 4,000 and they hadn't completed their count of the camp," said a U.N. peacekeeping officer, who declined to be identified.

After President Pasteur Bizimungu visited the camp Sunday and said Hutu gunmen inside the camp provoked the mayhem and put the number of dead at 300, UNAMIR released an unsigned statement which radically revised the casualty figure.

"After taking a more scientific count of the number of deaths, the figure has been revised to approximately 2,000," it said, giving no

reason for the change but saying UNAMIR force commander Major-General Guy Tounsi had visited the camp.

"You'd best go ask the U.N. what it means by scientific," said the U.N. officer, adding a recount was conducted using fresh UNAMIR staff.

Aid agencies said they discounted the latest UNAMIR estimate and what one worker called "contemptuous government arithmetic."

"The government does realise the heavy damage to its image the Kibeho incident has caused. But we shall not be part of a whitewash, a

massacre did take place here and that is what we are sticking to," another aid worker said.

RPA spokesman said all camps housing the 250,000 displaced Hutus in southwestern Rwanda since the end of genocide and civil war last year had been closed in an operation which started last Tuesday.

The Hutus were packed into trucks and sent home to an uncertain reception in their old communes or districts.

U.N. officers said 3,000 Hutus, either too sick or too scared to move, were still clustered in a hilltop compound at Kibeho.

Armenians mark 80th anniversary of massacre

YEREVAN (Agencies) — At dawn Monday Armenians, many of them from overseas, began climbing a hill in Yerevan to lay flowers at a monument to the hundreds of thousands of their people massacred by the Ottoman Turks in 1915.

The solemn gathering on Tsitsernakaberd Hill was presided over by Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan, the republic's religious leader, Catholicos Garegin I, president of the breakaway enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, Robert Kocharyan and other dignitaries.

Catholicos Garegin I handed over the bones of an Armenian killed in what was formerly western Armenia to the directors of a new underground memorial museum.

Work began on the three-level museum in November 1994. It will house a centre for research into the massacre, which the Armenian authorities want Ankara to recognise as genocide.

Armenia puts the number of victims at around 1.5 million, while some historians say the death toll was at least 800,000.

After laying flowers at the monument, built in 1965, the Armenian leaders attended a special memorial service at

the church in Echmiadzin, a spiritual magnet for Armenians worldwide.

Church services were also held throughout Armenia and in all Armenian churches throughout the world.

Susanna Arakelian, 95, recalled fleeing across a bridge with her husband as the Turks pursued Armenians from her village.

"The Turks came after us and while crossing the bridge, on horseback they hit the refugees. Some fell into the water, and were not rescued. That's how I lost my husband," she said.

Susanna was married at the age of 12, her parents fearing that she could be kidnapped by the Turks otherwise.

Gegisabet Sarkisian, 90, said her parents gave her old clothes to wear "so that the Turks in the villages would not kidnap me."

"I hardly saw my father, because he only returned at night. All the villages were burnt by the Turks," she recalled.

An Armenian revolt in the Van region, where the Turks opposed the Russians in World War I, provided the excuse the Ottoman government was seeking to execute

Armenian leaders and deport the rest of the population from eastern Anatolia.

Armenians angrily reject Turkey's argument that during a war the government had to move a population sympathetic to the enemy.

Ruben Gasparian, an Armenian soldier, told AFP his grandfather was seven years old when the massacre happened.

"I'm proud to be in the Armenian army. We'll never allow such a tragedy to happen again," he said.

Musheik Avakian, 86, recalled seeing his relatives butchered by the Turks.

"I come each year to this monument as if it were my parents' tomb."

For Haro Tegelian, who arrived in Yerevan from Cyprus, the gathering "shows we don't forget the genocide and it is time now for the Armenians to show their true potential and strengthen the country's independence."

Armenians have been suffering from chronic shortages of electricity and heating for the past three years due to a blockade imposed by neighbouring Muslim Azerbaijan.

The two Transcaucasian republics are at war over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.

In New York, about 1,000 people gathered Sunday to mark the 80th anniversary of the forced deportation of Armenians from Turkey, and protesters urged Congress to condemn the killings.

Speakers at the rally urged Congress to approve a resolution recognising the massacre, which they said was the first to be called genocide. Congress has refused to pass such a measure for fear of offending Ankara.

At the protest, John Bazian said his father, a businessman, was buried alive in a hole that he and other victims were ordered to dig. Bazian, now 90, lives in the New York borough of Queens.

"This kind of a gathering here gives me encouragement that something will be done," Mr. Bazian said. "I don't lose my faith."

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, prelate of the Armenian Church of America, said the church teaches believers to forgive those who wrong them — but "forgiveness does not imply denial."

"We shall forgive those who feel sorry for what they and their fathers have done," Mr. Barsamian said.

Malaysians begin voting in remote Borneo rainforest

KOTA KINABALU, Malaysia (R) — Forest dwellers who live in community longhouses and still hunt with blowpipes trekked through the jungles of Borneo Monday to cast votes on the first day of Malaysia's general election.

Voters in the jungle interior of Sarawak and Sabah states cast their ballots Monday. Coastal towns in the two states vote along with the rest of Malaysia Tuesday.

Over nine million people, almost half the population, are eligible to vote.

Polling officers left Sunday by helicopter, boat and four-wheel-drive vehicle to travel deep into the rainforest,

where tribal groups like the Penans still hunt by blowpipe and where dayaks and ibans live in community longhouses.

Jalinah Mosudil, 41, was an early voter in the village of Terian, in Sabah, having walked there, carrying her six-month-old, from her home in the rainforest the day before.

"I walked five miles, it took almost six hours, because I wanted a say in who my leader will be," she said in front of the polling station, a small wooden school.

Bernard Dompok, a federal minister and parliamentary candidate from Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad's

National Front, took considerably less time to get there.

He came by helicopter from Kota Kinabalu, only minutes away, landing in the school yard for last-minute campaigning.

An election official in Sabah said voter turnout was poor, with only 55 per cent of eligible voters showing up due to poor weather conditions the previous day.

He said seven election beams were stranded in Sabah because of landslides caused by heavy rains.

In neighbouring Sarawak, Prime Minister Mahathir's ruling National Front got off

to an auspicious start 10 days ago when nine of its parliamentary candidates won on nomination day, as the opposition failed to field candidates.

Probably the smallest polling station in Malaysia was set up at Long Imam, deep in the interior of Sarawak, for a small community of 10 Penans, state election officials said.

Mr. Mahathir is almost certain to get a thumping two-thirds parliamentary majority in the polls, which are taking place amid unprecedented prosperity. Malaysia is one of the fastest growing countries in South East Asia.

Berlusconi heads for narrow win in Italian polls

ROME (R) — Silvio Berlusconi's Freedom Alliance was set Monday to emerge as the biggest bloc in regional polls in Italy but to fall short of the outright win needed to support its drive for a snap general election.

A computer forecast based on early returns from the 15 regions that voted Sunday put support for former Prime Minister Berlusconi's centre-right alliance at 43.2 per cent.

A centre-left alliance, based around the former communist Democratic Party of the Left (PDS), was seen as winning 38.7 per cent, according to the forecast for RAI Television by the Abacus Organisation.

The rest of the votes were divided between smaller parties including the federalist Northern League and the far-left Communist refoundation.

Exit polls Sunday night had forecast support for the Freedom Alliance at just under 45 per cent.

Mr. Berlusconi took that as a cue to repeat his call for a snap general election, his battle cry since he was unseated last December following a revolt by the League which had been in his coalition government.

"This is a confirmation, if

any were necessary, that there is a need to go to the polls immediately," Mr. Berlusconi said after the predictions from exit polls were released.

"I think that this fact, this vote, must lead to immediate elections to recover the democratic normality of the country."

The media magnate said he would meet other leaders of his centre-right alliance Wednesday and ask President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro to dissolve parliament and call a general election.

More than 40 million Italians were eligible to vote to election presidents and assemblies in 15 of Italy's 20 regions. The polls were the first major test of public opinion since Mr. Berlusconi was forced to resign.

Elections were also held for councils in 75 provinces and more than 5,000 towns.

Lamberto Dini took over as prime minister three months ago to head a stop-gap "government of experts" with a limited four-point agenda.

Former central banker Dini is expected to present a proposal on pension reform — the last item on his programme — within the next few



Silvio Berlusconi, leader of the Forza Italia party, smiles as he casts his vote for the Italian regional elections at a Milan polling station (AFP photo)

Political commentators expect a general election in Italy in the next few months, but say it now looks increasingly likely to be delayed until October.

India's Congress denies threat to government

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's ruling Congress (I) Party Monday denied the government was threatened as a divided opposition firmed up behind a parliamentary move aimed at toppling it.

Congress spokesman Vittal Gadgil said the government of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao was confident of surviving attempts by the dissidents to bring it down on the floor of parliament.

"There is no threat to the government," Mr. Gadgil said, as the bicameral house opened here for the third and last stage of its budget session, during which it faces an unprecedented parliamentary vote that can oust it.

"The government is strong, stable and secure," Mr. Gadgil told AFP.

Mr. Gadgil's comments came a day after the centrist-left combine joined the main opposition right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) and announced its support to the

anti-government move by Congress rebels.

Rangarajan Kumaramangalam, a Congress MP and a vocal critic of Mr. Rao, has threatened to move "cut motions" in parliament seeking changes in the country's annual budget presented last month in defiance of the party leadership.

A "cut motion" is a virtual no-confidence move which can topple the government if it wins majority approval in the lower house of parliament, where the 109-year-old Congress enjoys a slender majority.

Congress sources said not more than a dozen of the party's some 270 MPs were expected to vote for the "cut motions" and added that the minor opposition parties would come to the government's rescue.

"The government will not fall," a party official added. The lower house has a strength of some 540 MPs, but smaller parties and independent MPs have in the past

broken ranks with the mainstream opposition.

Mr. Kumaramangalam, a bitter critic of Mr. Rao's free-market reforms, said he was confident of gaining support from party MPs because of what he described as the government's deviation from a traditional centrist platform.

"The situation of withdrawing the motions does not arise," he said in published interviews here Monday. "A government which does not follow the party policies, how can it be called my government?"

Mr. Kumaramangalam has repeatedly criticised the government's economic liberalisation initiated by Mr. Rao in July 1991 as "anti-poor" and called for a slowdown in economic reforms.

On Sunday, the centrist Janata Dal (People's Party), flush with a stunning electoral victory in the eastern state of Bihar, and Communists said they would vote for Mr. Kumaramangalam's "cut mo-

tions."

The BJP has already expressed support for Mr. Kumaramangalam, saying it wanted the government to go.

The Congress rebels, whose strength has been slowly growing, have announced a public rally in the northern city of Kanpur on May 1 and an all-India meet on May 19 in New Delhi in moves aimed at splitting the party.

Mr. Rao, 73, became India's ninth prime minister in June 1991 for five years.

Meanwhile in the biggest operation in more than a year, Indian troops killed at least 36 suspected guerrillas who allegedly crossed into Kashmir after receiving arms training in neighbouring Pakistan, officials said Monday.

Policemen said they have found 36 bodies in Chatoosa Nowgam and other villages in the area near the disputed India-Pakistan border, about 80 kilometres (50 miles) north of Srinagar.

Manila shifts tack to protect overseas workers

MANILA (AFP) — The Philippines has been forced into adopting new policies to protect its 4.5 million overseas contract workers (OCWs) and a bitter diplomatic spat following the execution of a Filipino maid in Singapore.

The move to invoke more "humane" policies comes as public indignation here lingers over the perceived official neglect of overseas workers who are seen as being responsible for the Philippines' economic turnaround.

President Fidel Ramos has led a special session of the country's new Congress to be started next month to urgently ratify a Charter for Overseas Workers.

Contract workers who are sent abroad to work in the country, Manila will also review its policies on the deployment of overseas workers and will undertake on-site investigations into the working conditions of 1.8 million Filipinos who are working illegally abroad.

The hanging of Flor Contemplacion in March caused to jeopardise Manila's ties with Singapore, while politicians have used the

hanging to gain political mileage in their campaigns for congressional elections on May 8.

Many Filipinos believe Contemplacion was forced to confess to the 1991 murders of fellow maid Della Maga and her four-year old Singaporean ward, and have viewed the rigid city-state with contempt since the execution.

Mr. Ramos has now ordered new measures with a more "human face" to protect overseas workers, wrote columnist Amando Doronila, highlighting the valuable contribution of the long-neglected sector.

"Ramos is force to recognise that economic growth has a fragile base if the social and human dimension is neglected," the columnist added.

Workers abroad were behind the country's economic boom following a drop in foreign investment in the Philippines between 1991 to 1993, triggered by a crippling energy crisis, analysts have said.

The new Congress will have its work cut out with Mr. Ramos calling a special session to ratify the charter

just two weeks after the polls.

The government will also "conduct an immediate study and consider the selective ban on domestic help and those belonging to the so-called vulnerable trade," said Emilio Gancayco, head of a presidential commission probing the Contemplacion case and the plight of Filipino workers abroad.

A ban already exists on deployments to Singapore, where more than 60,000 Filipinos work, mostly as domestics, following the hanging.

In addition, the president has expressed concern that more than 35 per cent of the total number of OCWs are female.

"I take serious notice of the fact that a large number of migrant Filipino workers are not documented officially, which makes them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse," Mr. Ramos said.

But not everybody is satisfied that the concern and proposed new measures will adequately protect workers abroad.

Migrants, which groups 31 Filipino migrant workers' support organisations in the Asia Pacific and Middle East,

has taken the issue to the streets, insisting that laws to protect OCWs are useless unless the government provides adequate employment for all Filipinos.

"We have always said that government's plans for us are nothing unless it can guarantee better standards of living, more jobs for all Filipinos," Poe Grateia, Migrant spokesman said.

But the exodus — at least of Filipino maids — is slowing down, according to statistics from the Labour Department which show that the deployment of newly-hired Filipino maids abroad dropped 71 per cent last year to 73,886 in 1994 from 256,197 in 1993.

The figures however covered only newly-hired Filipino maids, and did not include those returning to the countries where they work after a first stint there.

Among the countries that registered decreases in the deployment of maids were Bahrain, which dropped 60 per cent to 3,117, Japan dropping 99 per cent to 64, and Malaysia, dropped 44 per cent to 5,581.

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History on the go

JORDAN HAS made history twice in the past six years: First, when it introduced pluralistic democracy in its political system in 1989 and second when the Kingdom signed a peace accord with Israel in 1994. The two historic turns may have come independently of each other, but they are not mutually exclusive by any stretch of the imagination, nor should they be.

To start with, democracy as understood and practised worldwide means that people of all walks of life and with different or even opposing points of view are or should be at liberty to defend their respective opinions on national and foreign issues as long as this is done in a manner that does not threaten domestic peace and security. Then, the ratification of the peace treaty with Israel means that the treaty is part of the law of the land and it enjoys priority over all national laws with the exception of the Constitution. Promoting and protecting the former should not prejudice the latter, just as defending the latter should not compromise the former.

Yet, recent developments on the local scene suggest that we are confusing the handling of the two issues as if they are diametrically opposed to one another in nature and practicability. To cite just a couple of examples, thwarting a planned lecture by a former prime minister who has serious reservations about the treaty with Israel smacks of undemocratic policy. In the same vein, preventing a coalition of opposition parties from holding a conference against normalisation also runs counter to democratic norms.

Even though the people of Jordan have given their verdict on the treaty approving it by a large majority in a parliamentary vote, we fail to understand the basis on which people who are still opposed to the treaty itself or to some of its terms can be justly and fairly precluded from saying their minds.

The problem, though, does not rest there. On the legislative level, there are discouraging signs looming in the horizon which in their cumulative effect may give the totally wrong impression about our commitment to democracy. The draft laws on crime prevention and the holding of public meetings without a licence are a case in point. True each and every country has its own peculiar conditions which would necessarily impose certain variations in the application of democratic standards. Still there are certain basic rules on democracy which are universal in character and cannot be repudiated by the stroke of a pen. There is no democratic country worthy of the name which calls for a permit for holding a public meeting except to the extent necessary for maintaining order, unless of course the purpose of any such meeting constitutes a crime. Small gatherings not exceeding a few tens of people are never regulated except where there is a security risk such as the absence of an adequate fire escape.

As we see the issue, this country is committed to democracy and to the peace treaty. One obligation can and should be used to bolster the other. This is not an impossible mission as long as we remain faithful to the two objectives.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

PERHAPS the Arab countries in North Africa are more interested in the French presidential elections than other Arab states in view of the strong economic, social and political links they have with France, but the rest of the Arab World is also looking forward to see a new president sympathising with their cause, said a columnist in Al Ra'i daily Monday. It is true that the Arabs have no particular favourite among the presidential candidates to advocate their causes and support their views over those of Israel, yet the Arab masses are looking with hope to see a new president keen on serving the cause of justice and peace, said Mahmoud Rimawi. The writer said the Arabs want to see a French president steering France playing a more meaningful role within the European Union to end Israel's intransigence. Despite progress made in the peace process, Israel continue to occupy Arab land in Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon, holds on to its mass destruction weapons and does not recognise the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, said the writer. In addition, he said, the Arabs hope that France, under a new leadership, would pursue its efforts to terminate the sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people and thus safeguard Arab as well as French interests in the region.

The View from Fourth Circle

The delicate condition of the Arab Nation

By Rami G. Khouri

IT IS always instructive to notice the close coincidence between political and economic conditions in the Arab World. The past year, for example, has been a pretty typical one for the modern Arab World in terms of official and public violence, civil wars and general political tension — civil wars in Yemen, Somalia and Sudan, a bloody confrontation between state and opposition in Algeria, some street violence, deaths and arrests in Bahrain, continued killings by the state and the opposition in Egypt, open political opposition in Saudi Arabia, arrests of Islamists in Oman, continued death and occupation in Lebanon and Palestine due mainly but not exclusively to the Israeli occupation, ongoing national confusion in Iraq and Libya due to domestic autocracy and foreign subjugation, some rather tame political confrontations between government and opposition in Jordan over the peace accord with Israel, and you get the idea of what I mean when I say this has been a rather typical year for the Arab World.

One explanation for this state of affairs is the underlying economic stress that defines much of the Arab World. This is clearly visible in the indicators in the 1994 Unified Arab Economic Report, published jointly by the Arab Monetary Fund, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries and the League of Arab States.

The latest report shows a continuation of recent trends. Most socio-economic indicators improved steadily in the Arab World from mid-century to the early 1980s, but since then most indicators have either worsened or barely held steady, with no real improvement. Here are some summary findings of the latest report:

The general Arab condition is characterised by population growth that is much faster than economic growth, leading to two dangerous phenomena: stagnant individual incomes, and a growing gap between rich and poor. Total Arab population reached 240 million in 1993, representing 45 per cent growth over the population of 165 million in 1980. During this same period, overall Arab gross national product (GNP) in current prices grew by just 15 per cent, from \$440 billion to \$508 billion, while gross domestic product (GDP) increased by a slightly higher 18 per cent, also to \$508 billion.

Consequently, per capita income has declined steadily in the last 14 years; per capita GNP at current prices dropped by 36 per cent from 1980-1993, from \$3283 to \$2116, while per capita GDP dropped by 19 per cent, from \$2612 to \$2116. In real terms, accounting for inflation, the drop in average income and living standards is much higher. The positive note in this picture is the sign of recent improvements in per capita income. In the period 1990-1993, per capita GNP increased from \$1879 to \$2116.

These statistics, when further broken down into oil producers and non-oil producers, however, reveal the following: While overall Arab GDP per capita increased from \$2040 to \$2116 in the period 1990-

1993, the GDP per capita in oil producing states declined nominally from \$4913 to \$4829, while in the non-oil producers it increased from \$743 to \$859 — revealing a rather significant disparity between average individual incomes in the rich and poor Arab states.

Even more interesting facts emerge if we let the statistics reflect reality. If we take Iraq and Algeria out of the oil producers and put them into the poor Arabs' camp, reflecting their slide into conflict-induced economic distress in the last few years, we find the following: Per capita GDP in the Arab oil producers (excluding Iraq and Algeria) increased from \$7846 to \$8172 in 1990-1993; in the poor Arab states (including Algeria and Iraq [welcome, guys, it's kind of rough in this neighbourhood, but you'll get used to it after a while, the weather's real nice most of the year, and Ron Brown and Al Gore drop in for visits every now and then, which kind of livens things up]), GDP per capita increased only nominally, from \$1271 to \$1284. The ratio of per capita GDP in the poor to the rich Arab states increased in this four-year period, from 5.6 to 6.4, indicating a fast rate of increase in the gap between rich and poor Arabs.

In other words, the Arab World is divided into two groups of people: About 211 million Arabs are relatively poor, with a per capita income of some \$1284, which is just barely maintaining its level, and about 29 million Arabs are relatively well off, with a per capita income of some \$8172 that is holding steady or increasing only slightly.

This trend takes place a time when Arab proven oil reserves continue to increase in real terms (from 507 to 630 billion barrels in the period 1987-1993) and as a percentage of world reserves (from 57 to 62 per cent in the same period), and as Arab oil production keeps increasing (from 12.7 to 17.8 million barrels per day in that period).

Arab food imports remain relatively unchanged, at around \$20 billion per year, while the pan-Arab food gap has declined slightly in recent years, from an annual average of some \$12 billion in the mid-1980s to an average of \$9.2 billion in 1991-92.

Some positive trends are evident in Arab fiscal trends. Arab public expenditures as a percentage of GDP have declined slightly, from an average of around 43 per cent in the mid-1980s to around 40 per cent in 1992-93; this remains a very high figure, reflecting the unusually large extent to which Arab central governments control the overall economic destiny of their people.

Defence and security spending remains high and unchanged from earlier years, averaging 27 per cent of total current expenditures in 1992-93. This is partly explained by the conflict with Israel, but more generally it reflects most Arab regimes' preoccupation with maintaining their incumbency through absolute control of military power, alongside their heavy control of fiscal power.

Arab states also remain heavily dependent on

foreign economies for their commercial trade, while inter-Arab trade remains relatively low at around 9 per cent of total Arab foreign trade (compared to around eight per cent in 1985).

Arab foreign debt has held steady at around \$155 billion in recent years, according to the published figures, which need to be taken with a grain of salt — given the proven penchant of Arab states to disguise or totally hide some of their foreign debt, especially military debt. (My own guess is that real Arab foreign debt is over \$200 billion).

The debt burden on these borrowings remains at some \$11 billion a year, compared to an annual average of \$8 billion in the mid-1980s. In 1992, the Arab states repaid \$11 billion in principal and \$4.7 billion in interest on their foreign debt.

Meanwhile, official reserves have improved slightly, rising from an average of \$37 billion in the late 1980s to an average of \$46 billion in the mid-1990s — though the 1993 figure of \$47 billion is slightly less than the \$48 billion in Arab reserves in 1985.

Arab government budget deficits have not followed a clear trend, but rather fluctuate widely, from a low of \$15 billion in 1990 to a high of \$65 billion in 1991 (the Gulf war year, when rental payments for Western armies caused a severe rise in Arab government protection racket payments, er, excuse me, that is, I mean, unexpected budgetary spending). The collective Arab government budget deficit in 1993 was \$41 billion.

A good sign is the decline in Arab government budget deficits as a percentage of GDP — from 18 per cent in 1991 and 11.3 per cent in 1992, to 9.6 per cent in 1993. This reflects the application of strict economic adjustment programmes.

These indicators are useful in pointing out general trends in the condition of the Arab Nation, which remains in rather delicate economic and political shape. The greatest problem remains the severe imbalance between brisk population growth and sluggish economic expansion; this results in a large and perhaps even growing number of families living in poverty, high unemployment and underemployment, and sustained need for economic adjustment programmes that aggravate pressures on ordinary families.

It is interesting nowadays also to note the geopolitical implications of economic conditions in the Arab region, as some Arab states find themselves so pressured by economic stress that they must seek refuge and succor in imperial tutelage in Washington. It is particularly interesting to note that this is happening to both rich and poor Arab states, such as, for example, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Whether this works or not remains for history to determine. All we can do today is to continue to try to identify the underlying reasons for the violent, fractured, dependent condition of the Arab region, and, annually, to thank the four Arab institutions that produce the Unified Arab Economic Report for their most useful act of pan-Arab service and faith.

M. KAHIL



More nationalist France may emerge from ballot

By Paul Taylor
-Reuter-

PARIS — Foreign policy has barely figured in France's presidential campaign but victory for conservative favourite Jacques Chirac would make Paris more assertive in Europe and reassure old Arab and African allies, diplomats say.

There were few differences in the foreign policy platforms that Mr. Chirac, his fellow conservative rival Edouard Balladur and Socialist contender Lionel Jospin set out during the campaign.

an assertive France-first nationalist, Balladur is a cautious, pragmatist. Only Jospin is an enthusiast.

But opinion polls suggest Mr. Jospin has virtually no chance of succeeding Socialist President Francois Mitterrand, the last in a generation of fervently pro-European leaders.

Other prominent of pro-Europeans, former European Commission chief Jacques Delors, ex-president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and former prime minister Raymond Barre, decided against entering the presidential race.

Bosnia briefly became a campaign issue when two French U.N. peacekeepers were shot dead by snipers in Sarajevo last weekend.

True to their characters, Mr. Chirac demanded that U.N. forces be empowered to shoot back, Mr. Balladur threatened to withdraw them and Mr. Jospin called for more diplomatic pressure on the Serbs.

Among France's European neighbours, only Britain is likely to have cause for celebration of a Chirac victory.

Prime Minister John Major praised the anti-federalist view of the EU's future that Mr. Balladur

outlined in the newspaper Le Monde last year so warmly that he embarrassed its author.

Both Mr. Balladur and Mr. Chirac propose restricting the powers of the Brussels commission and the European Parliament and giving more authority to the council of EU member states.

Mr. Chirac said recently his aim would be to reconcile the British position, opposed to any further EU integration, with Germany's support for a much more integrated, federal system.

"Chirac is an old-style Gaullist. He may give the British trouble on agriculture and fisheries, as he did when he was prime minister, but he has an instinctive respect for Britain as an old nation," another European diplomat said.

The Paris mayor counts among his supporters both Philippe Seguin, leader of the referendum campaign against the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, and pro-Europeans such as Foreign Minister Alain Juppe and Enterprise Minister Alain Madelin.

Germany policymakers have made clear they would

prefer to deal with Mr. Juppe as prime minister and would be worried by a Chirac-Balladur run-off in which Mr. Seguin might emerge as Mr. Chirac's key asset and a potential premier.

However National Assembly Speaker Seguin sought to reassure the Germans this week, saying he accepted a single EU currency and pledging that Mr. Chirac would seek agreement with Bonn before changing economic policy to give priority to creating jobs.

In the Middle East, diplomats say Arab states, including Iraq, which have traditionally benefited from Gaullist rule, would welcome a Chirac victory.

The foreign ministry received anxious Arab inquiries after Mr. Balladur said in an interview with a Jewish newspaper last month that the Jews had "a little bit more" of a right to occupied Jerusalem than did other religions.

Mr. Chirac has close personal ties with many African leaders and counts among his advisers Jacques Foccart, long-time Gaullist fixer on the continent.

LETTERS



A mosaic amphora in Khirbet Othman church

Stop demolishing the Khilda Umayyad church

To the Editor:

ONCE AGAIN, a very important archaeological site is threatened with total destruction in the Khilda area. The site, known as "Khirbet Othman," consists of a church from the early Umayyad period (A.D. 687), which was built by Bishop George and dedicated to Saint Varus, and the remains of an Ayyubid-Mamluk village.

Part of the site has already been bulldozed to lay the ground for the construction of a modern building. The bedrock is littered with stone tools used by early humans from the Paleolithic period. This dates the site back to about 40,000 years and not to the late Bronze Age as previously assumed.

Evidence of the importance of the site is provided in what Dr. Robert Schick wrote in his thesis (the fate of the Christians in Palestine during the Byzantine-Umayyad Transition), in which he says "these Churches, in addition to providing us with valuable historical and artistic evidence demonstrate the prevailing mood of tolerance in early Islamic periods and call into serious question the widely accepted assumption that Islamic rule caused a widespread destruction, and that Islamic authorities prohibited the construction of new churches as well as the renovation of existing ones."

This important Islamic-Christian site must be protected now, and by all means. We should not accept the loss of our national heritage under any pretense.

Protection of this site is provided under the Jordanian antiquities law which prohibits even partial destruction of any archaeological site and also provides for the prosecution of the persons responsible for it. It is time for the law to be enforced.

Ghazi Saudi,
Administrative Committee member,
Friends of Archaeology,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

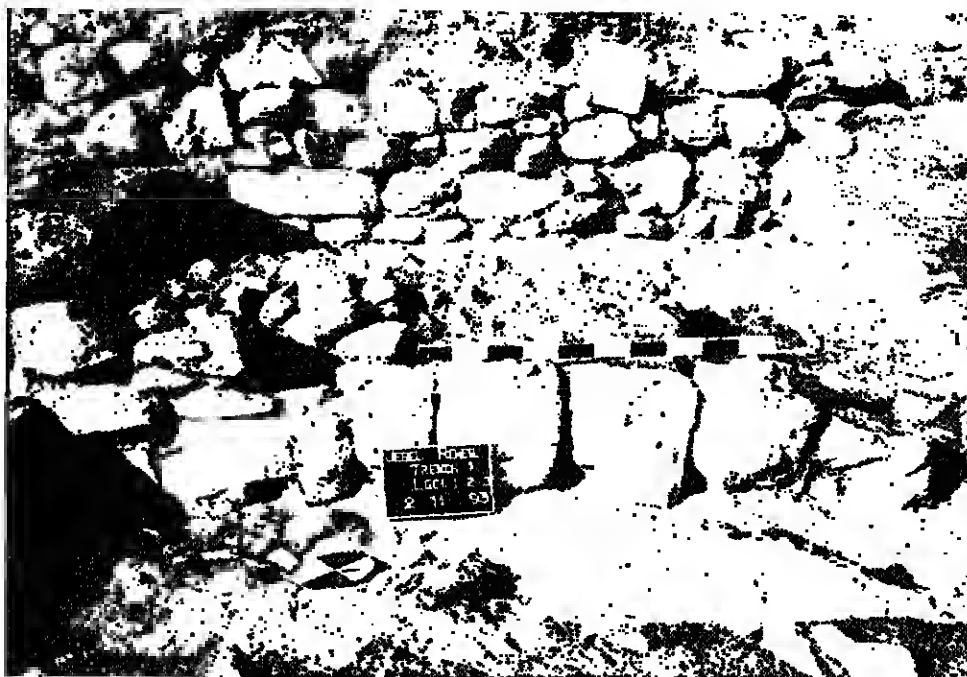
Upper Zerqa River survey reveals wealth, vulnerability of Jordan's antiquities

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

EXACTLY HOW rich is Jordan in antiquities sites, and how many sites remain to be documented? The recent experience of a University of Rome team of archaeologists, led by Gaetano Palumbo, in the Upper Zerqa River area reveals much about these two important questions — and it also reminds us of the urgency of protecting and documenting many important sites that are threatened with destruction due to urban expansion, agricultural activity and road building.

When Dr. Palumbo's team surveyed a 90-square-kilometre stretch of land around the Upper Zerqa River in late 1993, they were mainly interested in understanding the relationship between nomads and sedentary people during different time periods. They aimed to do this by identifying and studying different types of archaeological sites. They chose this area for several reasons: Little vegetation cover allows for good ground visibility and identification of sites from aerial photographs, and there is a high concentration of sites from many ancient periods due to the availability of arable land and permanent water resources from the Zerqa River and Wadi Dhuleil.

The team also recorded sites that are not usually considered archaeological in nature, such as recent bedouin encampments and traditional villages dating from the period after 1800, in order to collect a complete record of human occupation and land use. At the end of the one-month survey, they had identified a total of 218 new sites that had never been documented before, and that could be added to the



An enclosure wall excavated at one of the survey sites, possibly dating from the EBIV period.

35 sites previously identified by surveys earlier this century.

Of the 218 sites identified in the 90-square-kilometre survey area, most were burial cairns and tumuli on hillsides, though some were major ancient settlement sites that require extensive excavation. Virtually every single hilltop or ridge had one or more cairns, typically a pile of stones covering a cist tomb. Two of these sites can be positively identified as towers, but the rest are burials.

An interesting aspect of this work is that 199 of the 218 identified sites were documented from aerial photographs, while 19 were identified through intensive "transect" surveys. Among the identified sites were a mill, two towers, two cemeteries, three farms/hamlets, three forts, 19 settlements, 26 stone circles, 44 groups of cairns and 73 isolated cairns. The rest of the sites comprised isolated buildings, cave areas, enclosures, surface scatters of

pottery sherds or stone tools, isolated buildings, and unidentified structures.

At the 69 sites that were visited and investigated by the team, the most frequently represented historical periods were Byzantine (20 sites), Ayyubid/Mamluke (20), Roman (17), Iron II (9), Early Bronze (EB) II (8), Umayyad (16) and Epipaleolithic (6). Every single other historical period was also represented by a smaller number of sites, except for Late Bronze and Iron I.

The pattern of historical occupation of the Upper Zerqa River area reflects the same situation that characterises much of north Jordan. There is considerable evidence of prehistoric activity spanning the Lower Paleolithic through the Chalcolithic periods (circa 500,000-3300 BC), including several Chalcolithic villages near the confluence of the Zerqa River and Wadi Dhuleil. The first "intensive colonisation of the area", Dr. Palumbo told

the Jordan Times in a recent interview in Amman, "seems to start in the Early Bronze Age, especially in EBII (3000-2700 BC)".

Over 20 per cent of all sites investigated had an EB component, which was often the dominant one. Three of the EBII sites are fortified settlements. The Middle and Late Bronze periods, as in most of north Jordan, are less well represented; human activity in the region seems to pick up again in the Iron II period (918-539 BC), from which the team identified several important settlements, forts and fortified towns.

The high percentage of Roman and Byzantine sites mirrors the history of most of north Jordan; in this region, it also reflects the proximity of the nearby important Roman/Byzantine towns at Jerash to the west and Khirbet Es Samra to the east.

Among the unusual trends vis-a-vis the historical patterns of Jordan's ancient history are the de-



Part of the massive fortification walls at a large, multi-period site in the survey area, with remains from the Early Bronze, Iron, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods; this wall probably dates from the Iron II period (Photos courtesy Gaetano Palumbo)

cline in Umayyad presence at many Byzantine sites after the 6th and early 7th centuries, and a sharp increase in the number of major sites in the Ayyubid/Mamluke period. One possible explanation for this is that the pottery that has been identified as Mamluke may in fact be a local ware that was manufactured well into the Ottoman period, which itself appeared to be under-represented in the survey findings. Among the documented Middle Islamic sites are two important settlements at Khirbet Mak'hal and Khirbet Abu Zeighan.

Several large townsites have already been heavily disturbed by treasure hunters, and a few are threatened by the expansion of construction or agricultural activity — highlighting the fragility of many important sites that has reaffirmed by this survey. Khirbet El Janus, for example, a well preserved Iron Age fort with later Roman, Byzantine and Islamic

re-use, appeared virtually intact in a 1978 aerial photo; but in 1983 many of its stone circles had disappeared, the structure suffered heavy damage during the construction of the new road to Jerash, and the entire north wall of the fort was recently bulldozed for no apparent reason.

At the site of Khirbet Wad'ah, a very large Roman, Byzantine and Islamic village nestled among mountains north of the river, some decorated stones in a large building were apparently stolen in the brief period between the two visits the archaeologists made to the site; fortunately, they had photographed the building on the first visit.

Another nearby site called Wad'ah, on a wide terrace above the Zerqa River, comprises the remains of a very large Pottery Neolithic Yarmoukian village (6000-5000 BC). The site was cut by the construction of a new road, and some 500 metres of sections

are visible along the road. The large Early Bronze Age fortified town at Jureyeh, on the northern periphery of Zerqa, has been heavily disturbed by treasure hunters and is also threatened by new construction activity.

Jebel Er Rehail soundings

The team conducted three soundings at the important Early Bronze Age townsite of Jebel Er Rehail, which had been first recorded in 1935 by Nelson Glueck, and was re-examined briefly by Dr. Palumbo in 1988. The soundings aimed to clarify the relationship between the two main periods of settlement at the site, the EBII and EBIV periods. An intensive surface survey at Jebel Er Rehail collected pottery sherds from the EBII, EBIV and Mamluke periods.

The excavations revealed three parallel walls in a sounding along the eastern slope of the site; these are

probably a series of terrace walls, but they may also form part of the town's fortification system. The predominance of EBIV sherds in this area helps date these structures to the late third millennium BC.

A second sounding, carried out in an area where a robber's trench had already penetrated the ground, identified two major strata: an EBIV layer associated with a wall, and a lower, EBII layer on bedrock that probably represented an ancient courtyard which included the remains of two tawabeen (bread ovens) and a refuse pit full of pottery sherds and ashes. EBII finds included basalt, pottery and chipped stone artifacts, and a copper disc (probably a small copper ingot).

The third trench revealed two walls that were founded on bedrock and formed a right angle, associated with a possible floor surface full of fallen stones. It seems that this structure was originally built in the EBII period, and re-used in EBIV, to judge by the large number of EBIV sherds.

Further excavations are required to clarify the relationship between the two different EB occupations, though the large amounts of diagnostic pottery will allow the archaeologists to document continuity and change in pottery production techniques during the one thousand years of the Early Bronze Age II-IV eras (circa 3000-2000 BC).

The survey was funded by the Cultural Office of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Research Council of Italy, and received generous assistance from the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, the American Centre of Oriental Research in Amman, and the Italian Embassy in Jordan. Excavations and survey work are expected to continue in 1995 or 1996.

Symposium opens on development

(Continued from page 1)

signed the Oct. 26 peace treaty.

The proposals for the projects were drawn up by the governments of Jordan, Israel and the United States, but the emphasis on realising most of them is on the private sector, and hence the significance of the large participation by American businessmen, said TDA Director J. Joseph Grandmatson.

The TDA estimates that there are up to \$4 billion worth of commercial opportunities in the Jordan Rift Valley which should go parallel to investments by the governments of Jordan and Israel to build related infrastructure services.

"The interest of the business community in the Jordan Rift Valley has been exceptional," said Mr. Grandmatson in an opening speech, adding that TDA was unable to include all the U.S. firms which wanted to attend.

"Not only is the number of firms which are here impressive," he said. "The quality of the companies is truly extraordinary. This bodes well for the future because the implementation of many of these projects will fall to the private sector."

"The historic peace agreement between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Israel has created a new challenge," he said. The challenge is "how do we ensure that peace-making becomes peace-building."

The symposium is an "opportunity to move the peace process forward by working together on the specifics of the projects that will transform the Jordan Rift Valley into a centre of economic cooperation, (of) projects that are of mutual benefit to Jordan and Israel."

Mr. Grandmatson also noted that the TDA as well as the Department of Commerce and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation were closely involved in the Amman symposium, part of a series of meetings in the run-up to the Middle East and North Africa economic summit to be held in Amman in October.

All three agencies and departments are working under a mandate from U.S. President Bill Clinton. Mr. Grandmatson noted, and read out a

letter from the president to the meeting.

"This symposium provides an important forum for discussing some of the major issues concerning the (Jordan Rift) Valley's development," said the president. "I hope public and private officials from each of our nations will take this opportunity to share technical, economic, and financial expertise. Working together, I am confident we can build a brighter future for all our people."

Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Ishtaidat also underlined the importance that Jordan attaches to the symposium and the promises it holds out in terms of a better life for the people.

"Our young generation has known nothing but regional strife," said the minister. There is "no turning back" from Jordan's commitment to maintaining peace and to "resolve all outstanding issues with neighbours."

"Economic benefits should shore up the fragility of peace... (and should) transcend the political boundaries of the partners," he told the opening session.

The minister set out an 11-point list of priorities that, he said, Jordan believes, were essential to the success of the development efforts in the Jordan Rift Valley.

These included infrastructure to assure the movement of goods, inter-governmental cooperation in helping the private sector, public sector funding for essential infrastructure and services, equality between government in sharing the output of projects and quick decision-making.

Among the participants are Raytheon International, Core International, Bechtel Corporation, Stone and Webster Corporation, the Dupont Group, Montgomery Watson, K&M Engineering, MCI International, Science Applications International, AT&T, Cather International, GTE, Harza Engineering, Camp, Dresser and McKee, Ecology and Development, FTR International, Morrison Knudsen, and Salomon Brothers.

The Israeli delegation to the symposium includes Alon Liel, director-general of the ministry of planning, Michel Arbel, a senior foreign ministry official, Refael Benvenisti,

Pinhas Guuekstern and Joseph Vardi, advisors to the government. Pinhas Ben Shaul, head of the planning department of the Ports and Railway Authority, Michael Beyth, head of earth science research administration, Oded Eran, a senior economic expert, Valeri Brachya, a senior expert in the environment, Yoram Grushkevich of the Bezek telecommunications company, Yehuda Bronicki of Ormat, and Yoav Sarne of Epstein and Sons.

Among the Jordanian officials attending the symposium are: Ministry of Planning Under-Secretary Nabil Annari, Ministry of Tourism Secretary-General Ghasan Al Mifteh, Royal Scientific Society President Hani Mulki, Jordan Electricity Authority Director-General Mohammad Arafah, Amman Financial Market Director General Omayya Tougan, Telecommunications Corporation Deputy Director General Afam Jamil, Natural Resources Authority head Fakhri Dagestani, Ousai Qteishat, secretary-general of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Mr. Qteishat's deputy Zafar Alem, and Prime Ministry Advisor Abdul Aziz Wishah as well as executives of Jordanian companies.

"There should be close and continuous interaction between the authorities and the general public on the core concepts of developing the Jordan Rift Valley. 'Simplicity is essential' to achieve this purpose," he said.

"There has to be an 'upgradog and modernising' of all laws and regulations related to investments and incentives for investors. 'As we move along nationally in terms of deregulation (and) ... investment promotion, ... easing of laws and regulations providing ease of access, is mandatory,'" said the Crown Prince.

"It is also important to bear in mind the possibility of a fast-track should be considered," he said, calling for a special economic zone which will provide a fully deregulated environment to help international business and start the process of establishing a trade hub north of the Dead Sea."

"Simplicity is essential to taking the general public on the side of the comprehensive development of the Jordan Rift Valley," he said, adding that the symposium should bring out ways to send the message to the world of "what we feel as the next clear step... where we stand specifically."

"We have come a long way in identifying objectives and projects," the Crown Prince told the session, which was attended by Mr. Peres.

Now the task ahead of planners were to bring about the means to implement the projects and this needs a "networking," said the Crown Prince. "It is extremely important that we decide what form of networking we need to proceed from the (October) summit if we are to realise the projects," he said.

Such a networking would involve a master plan for coordination among the parties involved and a specially mandated Jordanian-Israeli authority, he said.

"The establishment of an authority by Jordan and Israel is essential, particularly

Jordan, Israel agree on authority

(Continued from page 1)

The Crown Prince also noted that "the gestation period of the best organised projects ... will be something in the neighbourhood of a full 18 months to two years — at best."

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"The establishment of an authority by Jordan and Israel is essential, particularly

in (view) of our experience in institution-building in the Jordan Valley," said the Crown Prince. He referred to the establishment of the Jordan Valley Authority in the 70s.

The proposal "is totally accepted," said Mr. Peres at the press conference. "We are going to work together. We already have a skeleton of such an authority, and we shall make it into a real one," he added.

Aloo Leil, director-general of the Israeli ministry of planning, said later that "the idea can no longer be delayed" and suggested that an authority to take charge of joint Israeli-Jordanian projects in the Aqaba-Eilat area could be the forerunner of such a body.

Mr. Leil said: "There were some fears and misconceptions" among Israelis of a joint authority with Jordan if only because "they could not believe that Jordan would be ready to empower such a body with decision-making."

According to Mr. Leil, the initial Israeli concept of a joint authority was limited to joint projects between the Jewish state and the Kingdom.

The Crown Prince's call for a broader entity which would serve not only as a bureaucracy-cutting apparatus but also as a medium to convince the international business community of the commitment of the two countries to free market and the opportunities available to the private sector in the Jordan Rift Valley.

Mr. Leil said the proposed authority "will not replace any existing ministries..." and noted that France and Germany, shortly after World War II, had launched a joint "steel and coal committee" which eventually led to the birth of the European Common Market.

In his comments at the press conference, Mr. Peres, who also attended some of the working sessions of the symposium, said there was no escape from accepting market economy "or be left behind."

According to Mr. Peres, three billion of the world's six billion people have opted for market economy. "The difference is obvious," he said. "Whoever did adopt market economy is doing far better than the ones who rejected

"We feel that banks, insurance companies, companies, corporations... will make an effort to invest" in the projects, he said, adding that a distinction should be made between "smaller and larger projects."

He spoke of a "ring road" linking Aqaba with Eilat and Egypt's Tabaa, setting up a free trade area for industry near the Red Sea, expanding the Aqaba airport, and linking Jordan's phosphate and Potash plants with Israeli railways for export purposes.

"Instead of having a near miss over Aqaba, let us not miss the opportunity," said Mr. Peres, referring to the airport expansion proposal. "All these projects are payable, grantable," he said. "Many companies are showing interest already in doing the railroad."

Mr. Peres said the "idea is that private investors can invest and governments will guarantee."

The Israeli prime minister was asked whether he was optimistic that the proposal for a Middle East development bank made by Jordan, Israel, Egypt and the Palestinians and supported by the U.S. could be realised.

He said the four Middle Eastern parties had "declared that it was our interest to have a development bank in the Middle East."

Noting that the U.S. was the prime mover behind the idea after the "core" Middle East parties suggested it, Mr. Peres conceded that "there are some resentments in Europe" but "there is also some agreement."

The main difference between the European and American approach to the proposal is whether the bank should have its own capital, which is expected to be set at \$5 billion. Some of the dissenting Europeans argue that existing financing arrangements are sufficient to meet the needs of the region.

Mr. Peres said he had been in touch over the issue with most of the European leaders, including German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, the French government and British Prime Minister John Major, who visited Israel in April.

"I do believe that there is a fair chance that the bank will be established when the Amman summit conference will be open," said Mr. Peres.

PNA, Israel upbeat ahead of talks

(Continued from page 1)

said, adding that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) had received less than half the \$720 million promised for the last year.

Norway was due to present a paper at the talks calling for coordination between the U.S. and European donors, Mr. Shek said.

The Palestinians want the outstanding pledges rescheduled and are looking for another \$250 million to cover their budget deficit for the next nine months.

Donors slowed the disbursement of aid demanding transparent accounting procedures but Finance Minister Mohammad Nashashibi complained that this is no longer justified.

While Israel backs Palestinian calls for more donor money, the two are at loggerheads over value added tax. The self-rule authority has demanded more than \$100 million back from Israel, which says the sum owed is less than half that.

The Palestinian delegation including Dr. Shaath, Economy Minister Ahmad

Qouriea and Mr. Nashashibi left for Paris on Monday.

Israel's foreign ministry director general Uri Savir and finance ministry director general David Brodet will leave Wednesday and have informal talks with the Palestinians the same evening.

Israel meanwhile reopened its borders to more than 26,000 Palestinians workers barred since the start of the Jewish Passover holiday 11 days ago.

A Palestinian statistics official said 14,000 married men over the age of 30 entered Israel via Erez, the main Gaza border crossing. An Israeli official said about 12,000 would be let in from the West Bank.

Palestinians complained the closure, aimed at ensuring Israeli security, had harmed an already impoverished economy reliant on farm and construction work in the Jewish state.

Another three-month-old closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip imposed after militant suicide bombers killed 22 Israelis, still bans many more workers from Israel.

Islamic Jihad sets conditions

(Continued from page 12)

Jihad. Alhas Saftawi, a spokesman for Islamic Jihad, set three conditions for halting attacks:

— The release of 50 activists detained by the PNA authority after the Jan. 22 suicide bombing and a promise to halt further arrests as well as raids on Islamic Jihad offices.

— The cancellation of prison sentences imposed by the Palestinian security court against Islamic Jihad activists.

— An Israeli promise to stop attacks on Palestinians in the PLO-run areas and the West Bank, as well.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, reacting to reports that militants were willing to accept a limited ceasefire, said Sunday he would not accept any agreement between the PLO and militants that failed to halt all attacks on Israelis.

Talks between the PNA and Hamas groups have been less successful. Hamas said in a leaflet circulated in Gaza on Sunday

that Hamas activists must be released and their prison sentence revoked before the group will negotiate an agreement for halting attacks on Israelis. The PLO holds about 200 Hamas members, according to Hamas.

In addition, Hamas demanded Mr. Arafat cancel plans to disarm militants and publish results of an investigation into a Nov. 18 confrontation outside Gaza City's Palestine Mosque in which police opened fired on demonstrators. Fifteen Palestinians were killed.

The leaflet, signed by Jordan-based Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghosheh, said Hamas wanted to end infighting with other Palestinians but would attack Israelis "anywhere on our Palestinian land."

"There is no retreat from this opinion, and it is not subject to bargaining," the statement said.

Hamas negotiator Sayyed Sameh told the Associated Press that "the resistance against the occupation will continue everywhere on the land of Palestine. Holy war is a strategic policy."

مكتبة القدس

Jordan-Israel trade accord almost ready, Peres says

Israel also ready to discuss contradictions in Jordan-PNA, Israel-Palestinian accords

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Monday Israel and Jordan had almost finalised a trade agreement and that his country was ready to discuss any Israel-related problem related to implementing Jordanian-Palestinian accords.

The trade agreement is part of the accords that Jordan and Israel agreed to sign as part of a process of normalisation of ties following the signing of their peace treaty on Oct. 26.

Several rounds of negotiations were reported to have produced a draft accord, but Israeli insistence on limiting the extent of preferential treatment it would offer to Jordanian products was said to have been holding up the finalisation of the agreement.

Mr. Peres was asked at a press conference Monday on the fringes of a symposium on development of the Jordan Rift Valley on the reports, which also suggested that Israel was being insensitive to the huge disparity in the economies of the Kingdom and the Jewish state.

"I think the problem has been resolved," Mr. Peres replied. "The Jordanians have submitted a list of commodities that they want to export to the west of the

Jordan River. I think we have reached an agreement."

"On the contrary (to reports of Israeli insensitivity to economic disparities), Israel is asking Jordan to be a little bit more forthcoming on the issues, and I hope this too will be resolved," he added. He did not elaborate.

No Jordanian comment was immediately available. But informed sources said the sticking point in finalising the trade accord was a "free trade area" that Israel suggested as a component of the agreement.

Specific details of the proposal were not available, but, according to one source, "the idea of a free trade area (as part of the agreement) came up only recently and the proposal was new to Jordan."

"As such, Jordan is seeking a little bit of more time to study the issue before committing itself either way," said the source, who preferred anonymity. "But it is a safe bet that the accord could be signed in four to five weeks."

Under the peace treaty, Jordan and Israel are supposed to sign several agreements before May 10, among them the trade accord. But "it will not be a disaster if such an important agreement as the trade accord is not signed before the deadline," said another source.

In his comments Monday, Mr. Peres acknowledged that

"there are contradictions" in agreements signed by Israel and the Palestinians and by Jordan and the Palestinians but said his country was ready to discuss and resolve them.

He said some of the "contradictions" were of "bilateral nature" and affected all the three parties. "If we have a problem, then I tell the Jordanians, we sit down and negotiate it," he said. Similarly, Israel will also sit down with the Palestinians separately as well as together with Jordan to sort out the problems, he added.

Mr. Peres' comments followed statements by Palestinian officials that Israel was impeding the implementation of some of the accords that the PNA has signed with Israel.

Israeli-imposed restraints on Palestinian freedom of imports from Jordan are seen to limit the scope of Jordanian exports to the Palestinian territories. As a result, Jordan and the PNA had to put off the signing of their agreement until early May.

Industry and Trade Minister Ali Abul Ragheb said last week that PNA Economy Minister Ahmad Quriea had told him that the PNA and Israel had managed to settle some of the problems and that the Palestinians hoped to resolve the rest in time for the signing of the Jordan-PNA accord in May.

Iraq bans private trading of grain harvests

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's government, gearing up for another year of food self-reliance under crippling U.N. trade sanctions, is enforcing a strict state trading monopoly on all grains grown in the country.

"The marketing of wheat, barley, rice, maize and sunflower seeds shall be confined to the state at prices determined by it," said a decree issued by the Revolutionary Command Council over the weekend and carried by state-run newspapers Monday.

Since the United Nations imposed sanctions on Iraq in 1990 after it invaded Kuwait,

home-grown harvests have assumed vital importance in feeding the country's 18 million people.

Large quantities of Iraq-grown grain shipped onto the black market last year despite a government ban and threats of severe punishment, including amputation for offending farmers.

But this year, the government will both offer farmers much higher prices for selling grain into the state system, and tighten monitoring to make sure that they do.

According to new rules, government committees set production quotas for Iraqi farmers, based on the areas

they are cultivating. The farmers must then ship their full quotas to state silos.

A farmer could be jailed for three years and fined heavily for shipping less than half his quota while harvest collectors can punish farmers for failing to hand over even one per cent of their predetermined quota.

Local monitoring committees all over the country will check how much grain is entering state silos.

Both the government and private sector traders import some basic commodities through Jordan. But Baghdad's apparent rejection of a

new U.N. offer to sell some oil to buy humanitarian supplies means Iraqi harvests are again critical.

United Nations experts would not give any forecasts for this year's harvest. Iraq has not disclosed crop yields since the sanctions were imposed.

Grain and other staples go into a state rationing system which offers about half a person's needs of flour, rice, cooking oil, tea and sugar, at subsidised prices or free.

Iraqis make up the rest by buying on the much more expensive spot market.

Harvesting has already started in the south but Iraqi

and U.N. officials say basic shortages of working machinery, insecticides and seed-harvester yields, despite good weather conditions this year.

As an incentive to farmers to shun the black market, the government this month boosted prices offered for wheat and barley by up to three times. A tonne of good wheat now fetches 105,000 diars (about \$88 on the black market) at state silos.

Under the new monitoring system, anyone reporting a violating farmer will get a reward worth half the commercial price of the amount harvest collectors uncover.

UAE tightens up gold trade

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE), one of the biggest gold markets in the world, has tightened control on trading in the yellow metal to end manipulation and dealing in fake items.

The economy and commerce ministry said new regulations streamlining trade in gold and other precious metals had gone into effect last week and they would contribute to boosting demand in the local market, according to local newspapers.

The new rules have been under consideration for several years as there have been complaints about trading in fake gold.

Under such laws, all imported gold and previous stones have to be tested by the municipality before they are stamped and numbered. Gold also must be marked with a falcon, silver with a fort and platinum with a palm tree.

Imported gold stamped by foreign governments would be accepted only on a reciprocal treatment while plated items should show the percentage of all their components, according to the law issued by the minister, Said Gobash.

IMF predicts strong world economic growth, slowdown in U.S.

World's seven largest economies meet in Washington Tuesday to prepare for spring meetings of the 179-nation IMF and the World Bank. The seven are the United States, Japan, Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Canada.

IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus took the unusual step last week of publicly urging that America's central bank, the Federal Reserve, boost interest rates as a way of defending the dollar even though President Clinton's administration is worried that tighter money could transform economic slowdown into outright recession.

The IMF used Sunday's release of its economic forecast to elaborate on Mr. Camdessus' arguments. It said higher U.S. interest rates would be especially appropriate given that both Germany and Japan have reduced their rates in the past two weeks.

Higher U.S. interest rates in relation to Japan and Germany could serve to bolster the U.S. currency because dollar-denominated investments would then offer investors more return.

Mr. Camdessus told reporters that the IMF was assuming that the Federal Reserve over the course of this year would increase rates by another one-half percentage point on top of the three percentage points over the past year.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The global economy in 1995 should enjoy its strongest growth in seven years, but that prospect is clouded by the current weakness of the dollar and uncertainty about Mexico, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said Sunday.

In its latest survey of global economic conditions, the IMF predicted that economic recovery would gather steam in most of the world, but it forecast a significant slowdown in the United States this year and next.

The U.S. economic growth, as measured by gross domestic product (GDP), was projected to rise by only 3.2 per cent this year and drop to a slower rate of 1.9 per cent in 1996.

While such a slow pace would normally raise recession worries, IMF chief economist Michael Mussa put the chances of a U.S. downturn only in the "modest" range, at around 22 per cent.

But the IMF did concede there were significant risks to its forecast, stemming mainly from fears that Mexico's economic crisis could spill over to other countries and that the dollar would continue to plunge. It has dropped to record lows against both the Japanese yen and the German mark.

The dollar was expected to be the chief topic when finance ministers and central bank presidents of the

er, were not optimistic that the Group of Seven meeting Tuesday would be able to produce a convincing rescue plan for the dollar given America's reluctance about higher interest.

In its new economic forecast, the IMF predicted that the world economy would expand by 3.8 per cent this year and an even better 4.2 per cent in 1996. These would be the best rates since a 4.6 per cent surge in 1988. Global economic output grew by 3.7 per cent last year, up sharply from 2.5 per cent in 1993.

It predicted that growth in Germany would accelerate slightly to 3.2 per cent this year. But it estimated that Japan would continue to struggle with subpar 1.8 per cent economic growth as the stronger yen makes Japanese exports costlier.

The IMF forecast that developing countries, which in recent years have liberalised their economies to attract capital, would enjoy growth of 5.6 per cent this year.

But it cautioned that this

outlook was clouded by the turmoil in Mexico, now facing a severe recession after December's peso devaluation sparked a plunge in investor confidence that spilled over into other emerging markets.

"This episode serves as a powerful reminder for all economies of the speed with which perceptions about a country's situation can change, and the heavy costs of allowing economic imbalances to persist," the IMF report said.

The IMF report also recommended greater reduction of America's budget deficits, which could discourage some domestic consumption, in turn lowering the massive trade deficits blamed for the dollar's weakness.

And it urged that European countries take advantage of their prosperity by also cutting budget deficits, and that Japan further deregulate its economy and lower trade barriers contributing to continuing huge trade surpluses.

IMF chief urges Group of Seven states to get their acts together

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The Group of Seven (G-7) industrial countries, notably Japan and the United States, should make greater efforts to coordinate their monetary policy and put their macroeconomic house in order, IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus said Monday.

Delivering a strong message to the group a day ahead

of a Washington meeting of G-7 finance ministers and central bank governors, he told a news conference the seven countries must cooperate more closely.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief criticised the G-7 for "missing a good opportunity to prevent this quiet unhelpful development and this excessive fall in the dollar" by failing to take

coordinated action earlier this year.

Such action, coupled with statements showing the G-7 recognised their responsibility to try to maintain stability in world currency markets, could have prevented or slowed the fall, he said.

"Do I favour a strengthening of coordination among the Seven? My answer is yes," Mr. Camdessus said.

Reich urges U.S. business to help close income gap

WASHINGTON (AP) — Labour Secretary Robert Reich is urging private business to help correct the widening income gap between rich and poor, saying the disparity threatens to "rip our society apart."

Mr. Reich said that most Americans shared equally in income growth from 1950 to 1978. Since then, however, "almost all the increase in

average family income... has gone to the top fifth" of the U.S. population, he asserted.

At the same time, "the bottom 20 per cent has lost 15 per cent of real family income," Mr. Reich told a meeting of the Financial Women's Association of New York.

The resulting disparity, he said, poses "an enormous problem for this country.... If

unaddressed, this can rip our society apart."

Contributing to the disparity is the fundamental change in the U.S. economy — a shift from factory production lines and concentration on domestic targets to high-tech occupations and global competition, Mr. Reich maintained.

In order for Americans to get the education and training

necessary to compete in the world economy and raise their standards of living, the government already has begun school-to-work apprenticeship programmes and offers low-cost student loans, he said.

The Clinton administration also proposes streamlining federal job-training programmes, vouchers to be used at community colleges to gain

skills and tax deductions to pay for education and training.

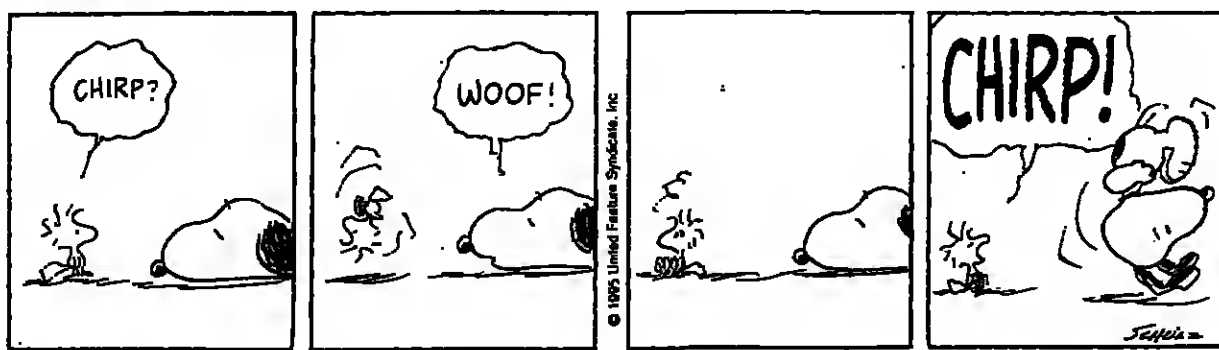
But, Mr. Reich said, "the government cannot do it alone. The private sector has got to take the lead."

He suggested that businesses train their workers, share profits with employees, rely on attrition when downsizing and work with community schools,

Mr. Reich also urged business not to conduct bidding wars for state and local tax breaks, which he said means less money for public schools.

"Don't hit up the federal government for unwarranted subsidies and tax breaks," he said. "If we're committed to ending welfare as we know it and we should be — let's get rid of corporate welfare as well."

Peanuts



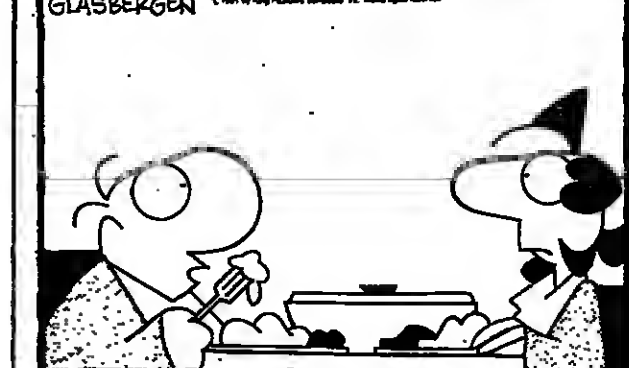
Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff

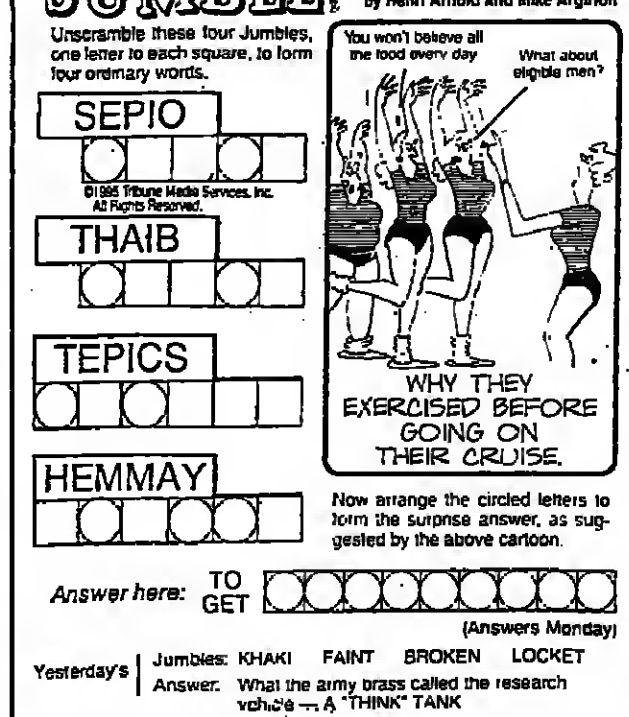


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HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY APRIL 25, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can gain the information you need from others today if you show that you must improve your position in life.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Add a little inspiration to the plans you have made and try some new methods for best results of a new project for your success.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) One who is cognizant of your ambitions and outlook can give you a plan today which can bring you far greater success.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Take time for entertainment with a fellow associate and come to a far better understanding. Spend the evening at home with your loved ones.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Handle those duties at home which will please your family and make conditions there more ideal. Enjoy recreation with close friends and loved ones tonight.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Study desk work well and then handle it very efficiently and gain right benefits today. Problems can be solved easily with your loved ones.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Concentrate on finances and family so that you can improve your position in life. Plan improvements on your home and property.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You feel that nothing is going fast enough today, so get busy improving your routines and things fall into place.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get your tasks at home completed more efficiently and you can command greater benefits later today.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Listening to the advice of a good friend is wise since you can gain your personal wishes more easily. Seek out the advice of friends today.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A dynamic bigwig can give you the right steer so that you can gain your ambitions, if you contact early him or her today.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Contacting an older individual out-of-town can gain you the advice you need today in order to gain some personal longing.

Birthstone of April: Diamond — Amethyst

THE Daily Crossword by William Canine



business
daily
beat

A review
of economic news
from the Arabic press

Sheraton
returns
to Amman

AL DAWLIYYAH for Industrial, Trade and Tourism Investments, a JD 14 million public shareholding company, has signed an agreement with the Sheraton International group to manage the Amman Sheraton hotel which will be set up by the Al Dawliyyah for Hotels and Malls (ADHM) which is under establishment with a JD 25 million capital. ADHM, a sister company to the Al Dawliyyah for Industrial, Trade and Tourism Investments, will be floating JD 6 million for public subscription since 75 per cent of the capital, or JD 18 million, has been paid for by the founders. Amman Sheraton Hotel, which will be a five-star hotel with 300 rooms/suites, is the first project for the two aforementioned companies and will be followed by other projects such as commercial complexes and three-star hotels in Shmeisani (Amman), Aqaba, Petra and Dead Sea area. According to the agreement, the Amman Sheraton Hotel to be situated on the Fifth Circle, should be completed after 26 months. There are 84 hotels in Amman with a capacity of 5,000 beds but only five hotels have a five-star classification (Al Dustour).

THE JORDANIAN dinar is now a free convertible currency in international trade transactions without any change to its exchange value. The International Monetary Fund has approved Jordan's acceptance of article 8 of the fund's agreement and, as such, the Jordanian dinar is freely convertible for current commercial transactions (Al Ra'i).

THE GENERAL assembly of the Arab Jordan Investment Bank approved raising the bank's capital to JD 20 million and the distribution of dividends at a rate of 12 per cent (Al Ra'i).

LEBANESE COMPANIES have expressed their desire to widen their purchases of Jordanian medicines. Lebanon imports drugs through 339 foreign companies only one of which is Jordanian (Al Dustour).

THE NUMBER of companies which applied for investments on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea has risen to 97 Jordanian, Arab and foreign companies. Among the interested parties were companies from the U.S., Indonesia, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, France, Israel, Romania, Canada, Britain and South Korea. Most of the applications were for investments in hotels, tourist villages and spa hotels. Meanwhile, the rural development department at the Jordan Valley Authority is organising field trips every Saturday for the investors who have submitted investment requests and those who want to make site visits before submitting their applications (Al Ra'i).

ECONOMIST AND former Minister Bassam Al Saket said in a lecture that becoming a member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, now the World Trade Organisation (WTO), entails lifting subsidies on the agricultural sector and opening the commercial sector to strong foreign competition especially in the area of government contracts. He pointed out that the WTO bans subsidising agricultural products and dumping policies. Furthermore, the WTO requires that every member country has to submit all its customs-related documents and legislations and, as such, all the figures appearing in the documents would be considered as fixed ceilings. Dr. Saket said that within the WTO rules, a country's exchange rate will be according to the volume of trade meaning that the balance of payments will determine the exchange rate and not the state (Al Aswaq).

Lloyd's of London says
doom reports are unfounded

LONDON (R) — The Lloyd's of London insurance market, facing the biggest cash crisis in its 308-year history, admitted Monday that its losses were huge but denied reports that it was on the brink of collapse.

"The apocalyptic (sic) is unfounded and the question of Lloyd's ceasing to trade is not on the cards," Matt Huber, Lloyd's communications manager, told BBC Radio.

"This institution has seen the highest loss of any institution in recent years and is now trading very profitably indeed and will continue to do so," he added.

Lloyd's staunch defence of its future followed doom-laden reports of £9 billion (\$14.4 billion) losses it has accumulated over five years and a lack of funds to cover them.

Newspapers claimed that many of the 31,000 "names" — individuals who pledged unlimited liability to finance the underwriting syndicates

that issue insurance policies — are unable or unwilling to pay up, claiming they had been misrepresented.

"Despite the substantial losses of the recent past Lloyd's has continued to serve its policyholders worldwide by the payment of all valid claims," Lloyd's Chairman David Rowland said in a statement Monday.

Names have filed almost 30 legal cases to try to get compensation for some £3 billion (\$4.8 billion) of the £8 billion (\$12.8 billion) or so losses they have suffered in all at Lloyd's since 1988.

"The situation is a critical one. It has now reached a crunch where something dramatic has to be done to raise the capital or it will be impossible for Lloyd's to trade as a society next year," said Christopher Stockwell, chairman of the Lloyd's Names Association.

Peter Middleton, chief executive of Lloyd's, said Friday that its council was conducting a wide-ranging review of its operations.

"Lloyd's is seeking to produce a settlement of all outstanding litigation, to bring finality to the Lloyd's affairs of many members and to secure a profitable future," he said.

The council, which meets on the first Monday of every month, has also called a session for Tuesday but a Lloyd's spokesman said it has nothing to do with the latest reports which "have been blown completely out of proportion."

Newspapers also claimed that Lloyd's cash worries are compounded by the financial problems of other insurance companies, or reinsurers, which owe them money and the dwindling amounts in Lloyd's central fund, an emergency account.

They have predicted that if the situation is not resolved soon Lloyd's may not pass its annual solvency test, administered by the Department of Trade and Industry, which it must do to continue trading.

"At present we are confident we can find solutions to the problems and we are examining everything the society does to find a way forward," Mr. Huber added. "If there is going to be an offer of settlement to the membership they may be forthcoming by the end of May."

Much of the catastrophic losses Lloyd's has incurred have resulted from disasters such as the Piper Alpha oil rig explosion in the North Sea and the huge Exxon Valdez oil leak off the coast of Alaska and asbestos and pollution-related claims in the United States.

Lloyd's, which reports its results three years in arrears, is expected to announce more bad news when it reveals figures for 1992 next month.

China railways lost more than \$400m in '94

BEIJING (R) — China's huge, inefficient railway network lost more than 3.4 billion yuan (\$400 million) in 1994 because of overly rigid management, and could lose even more this year, the China Daily has said.

Beijing will launch reforms of its rail network, which carried more than a billion passengers in 1994, to make it more market-oriented, the newspaper quoted minister of

ways and the growing aviation sector, the China Daily said.

New, high-quality passenger trains would be introduced gradually to improve the quality of service on some long-distance and tourist routes, while the proportion of sleeper cars on trains between popular destinations would be raised to 25 per cent this year from 23.1 per cent in 1993.

Demand for sleeper tickets far outstrips supply on most long-distance routes. Services that stop at every station would be cut back because they waste capacity and personnel, the China Daily said.

Cheap tickets make non-

express trains, though often dirty and overloaded, the main way to travel long-distance for many rural Chinese who cannot afford express surcharges or bus prices.

Railway cargo handling will be reformed to improve safety and boost efficiency, the newspaper said.

Railways carry 90 million tonnes of inflammable, explosive or poisonous goods every year, it said.

The reforms are part of an ongoing campaign to modernise the rail network. Beijing announced in January that it would this year begin to break-up the centralised system into many separate companies.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI				
TELEPHONE: 660170 / 663170				
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 24/04/1995				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK PIG	400	77090	193.000	192.500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	9658	47184	4.900	4.890
BANK OF JORDAN	1020	3894	3.820	3.820
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	2250	3272	1.470	1.450
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	7970	2287	2.860	2.860
THE HOUSING BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	10650	83262	8.000	7.830
JORDAN KIWAT BANK	3250	9717	3.010	2.990
JORDAN GULF BANK	5550	7981	1.470	1.430
ARAB JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	54200	206206	3.680	3.680
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	26743	104972	3.950	3.940
UNION BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	250	1170	4.680	4.680
BUSINESS BANK	21850	95455	4.280	4.250
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	2100	10114	4.810	4.800
BEIT KHALIL SAVING & INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	3300	12230	3.750	3.720
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	99500	138818	1.400	1.390
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	900	3622	4.100	4.300
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	38150	77052	2.070	2.040
BANKS SECTOR	287841	905108	INDEX NUMBER: 169.25	CHANGE: -0.507
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	12750	33768	2.690	2.770
ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	150	630	2.650	2.520
THE NATIONAL ALLIA INSURANCE	200	614	3.100	3.070
INSURANCE SECTOR	12759	35162	INDEX NUMBER: 135.63	CHANGE: -0.757
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	21200	36862	1.750	1.680
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER /NEW	147424	147424	1.650	1.680
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	500	1565	3.280	3.140
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	9050	22369	2.540	2.450
MACHINERY EQUIP. RENTING & MAINTENANCE	3650	2519	3.690	3.690
UNION KIDOLE EAST COMMERCE HOTELS	17945	48646	2.740	2.700
ARAB TRAVEL FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	2500	8375	3.360	3.350
JORDANIAN EXPATRIATES INVESTMENT HOLDING	1100	1430	1.280	1.300
SERVICES SECTOR	144595	269188	INDEX NUMBER: 143.63	CHANGE: -0.427
ATTACHED COST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	2750	3542	1.330	1.270
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	113789	386980	3.380	3.380
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW	1000	5712	5.800	5.600
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	1400	13495	9.650	9.620
JORDAN TANNING	109	871	7.930	8.000
WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	850	1547	1.820	1.820
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	400	1480	3.700	3.700
THE JORDAN WOODEN FILLS	2600	22280	8.650	8.650
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	30782	124247	4.320	4.280
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	700	4200	5.930	6.000
THE PUBLIC KITCHEN	4034	4034	2.790	2.770
RAPIA INDUSTRIES	1878	3100	1.310	1.310
DAR AL DANA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	3300	8415	2.550	2.540
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	13400	113512	8.350	8.400
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	34650	31690	9.10	9.10
ARAB ALIMENTARY INDUSTRIES	4000	29401	7.350	7.350
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	41700	28451	6.90	6.80
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	250	383	1.610	1.530
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRIES	2000	6300	3.150	3.150
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	500	2195	4.420	4.390
JORDAN ROCKETRY INDUSTRIES	1250	1520	1.210	1.200
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/ITMO	7850	4956	6.30	6.40
JORDAN SULPHUR-CHEMICALS	4250	22315	5.150	5.300
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	9600	17739	1.800	1.870
JORDAN SULPHUR-CHEMICALS	15900	41572	2.570	2.620
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	250	450	1.830	1.800
KAYTER INVESTMENT	54350	118982	2.130	2.240
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.				
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	349680	1006344	INDEX NUMBER: 129.77	CHANGE: +0.127
GRAND TOTAL	795375	2215803	INDEX NUMBER: 151.00	CHANGE: -0.302
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET		494549		
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET		546157		

Financial
Markets

Jordan Times
in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close
	Date 24/4/95	Date 24/4/95
Sterling Pound	1.6127	1.6180 **
Deutsche Mark	1.3701	1.3391
Swiss Franc	1.1305	1.1245 **
French Franc	4.1678	4.0483 **
Japanese Yen	82.70	82.41
European Currency Unit	1.3403	1.3400 **

* USD Per JYD
** Foreign Opening 6:00 AM GMT

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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.3712/22	Canadian dollar
	1.3668/78	Deutschemarks
	1.5294/04	Dutch guilders
	1.1304/14	Swiss francs
	28.10/14	Belgian francs
	4.8400/50	French francs
	1709.4/4.4	Italian lire
	83.24/34	Japanese yen
	7.3825/25	Swedish crowns
	6.1730/80	Norwegian crowns
	5.3765/15	Danish crowns
one sterling	\$1.6184/94	
one ounce of gold	\$390.60/91.10	

Jordan invited to take part in maintaining security at Atlanta Olympics

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — Not only will the creme of Jordanian athletes participate in the Atlanta Olympics next year, but a number of Jordanian officers might also have the chance to take part in maintaining security at the Olympic village.

Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) Chairman Dr. Mouaffaq Al Fawwaz told the Jordan Times that the Ministry of Interior had received the request from the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) and that Jordanian officials were considering the request for 12-20 officers.

"It is a great honour for Jordanian personnel to be a part of the Olympics. They will undoubtedly benefit from this experience," said Dr. Fawwaz. "It is the first time a host country makes this request."

Recent reports said Olympic security training exercises were already being held in Atlanta and that an intricate security system was being placed to ensure safety.

Access to training centres, athlete dormitories and competition venues will be controlled with a radio frequency system that will read information encoded on accreditation badges.

Security officials will be able to use the system to track the movements of any person wearing an Olympic credential.

JOC begins preparations
Meanwhile, Dr. Fawwaz said the JOC's technical committee had already begun preparations for the July 19-Aug. 4 centennial Olympics in which only six Jordanian athletes will be representing the Kingdom as set by the International Olympic Committee.

"We have addressed all sports federations to name outstanding athletes so that the JOC can make its choice and athletes begin training as soon as possible."

Barkley leads Suns into NBA playoffs; Magic, Bulls, Rockets, Cavs lose

By the Associated Press

CHARLES BARKLEY led Phoenix into the playoffs with their eighth win in nine games as the Suns beat the Seattle SuperSonics 105-100 Sunday.

Barkley played only the first three quarters, finishing with 23 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists in 30 minutes. The Pacific Division champions didn't need any more from him as they led by as many as 21 points.

Seattle, which had won 12 of 15 before finishing in a two-game skid, finished 1-4 against Phoenix this season.

Wesley Person had 17 points for the Suns, hitting five of their 13, 3-pointers, and Kevin Johnson had 16. A.C. Green had 15 points and 15 rebounds.

Detlef Schrempf scored 18 points for Seattle, Gary Payton had 17 and Sam Perkins 16.

Spurs 97, Timberwolves 91: In Minneapolis, San Antonio rolled into the playoffs with their sixth straight victory and a league-high 62 wins.

Already guaranteed the best record in franchise history and the top seed in the Western Conference, the Spurs rested David Robinson most of the game. Chuck Person came off the bench to

score 20 points against his former team.

The Wolves (21-61), who were led by Isaiah Rider's 25 points, are the first team in NBA history to lose 60 or more games four seasons in a row and finished 41 games behind San Antonio in the Midwest Division.

Dennis Rodman, the league's rebounding champion for the fourth year in a row, had 10 points and 16 rebounds for the Spurs.

Pacers 103, Hawks 87: In Indianapolis, Sam Mitchell scored six straight points in a crucial third-quarter spurt as Indiana defeated Atlanta in a playoff preview.

Reggie Miller had 22 points to lead an Indiana offense that had five players in double figures.

Atlanta, which trailed by as many as 19 in the first half, was led by Mookie Blaylock's 19 points. The Hawks tied the game 66-66 on a 3-pointer by Blaylock with 4:13 left in the third quarter. Mitchell, who had 10 of his 14 points in the third quarter, then put the Pacers ahead to stay with 3:54 left to start a 12-4 run and Indiana led 82-71 after three quarters.

Hornets 97, Cavaliers 72: In Charlotte, North Carolina, Darrin Hancock scored nine points in leading Charlotte's 26-0 third-quarter run and

the Hornets won 50 games for the first time in their seven-year history.

Hancock, who had 13 points, finished the quarter with a length-of-the-court drive and layup to give Charlotte a 75-53 lead.

Alonzo Mourning had 26 points to lead six Charlotte players in double figures.

Bobby Phills scored 11 points in the first quarter and finished with 13 to lead Cleveland.

Bucks 104, Bulls 100: In Milwaukee, Glenn Robinson scored 36 points to overcome a 33-point performance by Michael Jordan as the Bucks survived a fourth-quarter Chicago comeback.

Eric Murdock's two free throws with 9.1 seconds remaining sealed the victory, which snapped the Bulls' six-game winning streak.

The Bucks led 90-81 going into the fourth quarter, then held on as the Bulls chipped away, closing within 98-95 with 5:19 left. Robinson hit a field goal to stop the charge.

Scottie Pippen added 15 points for the Bulls.

Knicks 113, Magic 99: New York hit 12 3-pointers, including four in a row by Hubert Davis in the fourth quarter, as the Knicks sent the Magic into the playoffs with a seven-game road losing streak.

With starters Patrick Ewing and Derek Harper sitting out a second straight game, the Knicks turned to their outside game, stretching a six-point lead to 98-85 with 8:06 left when Davis hit four treys in a 2:15 span.

John Starks had five 3-pointers and 26 points, and Charles Smith scored a season-high 29 for the Knicks.

Shaquille O'Neal, who finished with 13 points in 27 minutes, was in foul trouble in the second half, so the Magic also went to the perimeter and Dennis Scott hit five 3-pointers, scoring a season-high 38.

Bullets 106, 76ers 90: Landover, Maryland, Mitchell Butler tied a career-high with 26 points and George Murren had 15 points and 11 rebounds as the Bullets registered their most lopsided victory of the season and avoided tying a franchise record with their 62nd loss of the season.

Sharon Wright scored 22 points for the 76ers, who lost eight of their final 12 games. Philadelphia got 21 points from Dana Barros and 17 from Shawn Bradley.

Philadelphia coach John Lucas was ejected with 4:47 left in the game for arguing with referee Ted Bernhardt. Lucas wanted a technical foul called on Butler for hanging on the rim after a dunk.

Nets 102, Celtics 99: East Rutherford, New Jersey, Chris Morris converted a three-point play off an alley-oop with 5.9 seconds to play to lift the New Jersey Nets over Boston, sending the Celtics into the playoffs with a three-game losing streak.

Boston opens a best-of-5 first round playoff series with Orlando on Friday. The Magic won three of five regular-season meetings with the Celtics.

Armon Gilliam led the nets with 28 points and 14 rebounds. Rick Mahorn had 17 points and 11 rebounds and Kenny Anderson added 16 as the Nets, who lost 15 of their last 19, finished the season with a two-game winning streak.

Sherman Douglas had 25 points and 11 assists for Boston, while Dee Brown added 21.

Heat 129, Pistons 105: In Miami, Glen Rice scored 32 points and Kevin Gamble came off the bench to add a season-high 23 as the Miami Heat beat the Detroit Pistons, putting an end to a disappointing season for both teams.

Rice, who was awarded his team's MVP award at half-time, hurt Detroit with his outside shooting, scoring 21 second-half points. It was the 18th time this season Rice had scored more than 30 points in a game.

African Nations' Cup Ghana qualify for finals

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Anthony Yeboah, the English-based Ghanaian striker, steered his country to a place in the African Nations Cup finals with the only goal of the match against Niger on Sunday.

The Leeds United forward, playing his first game for Ghana in more than a year, found the net after 21 minutes.

Ghana are the first team to progress from the qualifiers to the finals of the tournament in South Africa next year after a weekend of intense activity in five of the groups.

The Black Stars are likely to be joined from Group Three by fellow West Africans Sierra Leone, who recorded an upset 2-0 win over Congo in Brazzaville, including a goal from 15-year-old striker Mohamed Kallon.

Sierra Leone now need just to beat Niger at home in June to qualify for their second successive finals.

Egypt, Liberia and Zaïre also strengthened their claims for a place in the 16-team tournament next January but there were setbacks for Zimbabwe and Togo.

Egypt beat Tanzania 2-1 in Dar-Es-Salaam on Saturday to remain on top Group Four while Liberia kept up their unbeaten record with a 1-0 defeat of Tunisia in Monrovia.

Zairean captain Kabeya Mukanya refused to be substituted in the second-half of the Group One match against Cameroon before inspiring his team to a 2-1 win.

The Belgian-based midfielder waved aside his coach's instructions to set up two goals for Zaire at the New Kamanyola Stadium in Kinshasa after Cameroon had taken a 68th minute lead through George Mouyeme.

Zaire's goals were scored by Mbore Ndinga and Kona Ngole. They leave Cameroon needing to win their remaining three matches to qualify.

Group leaders Zimbabwe also suffered a setback with a disappointing 1-1 draw at home to Malawi in Harare. Coventry City's Peter Ndlovu gave Zimbabwe the lead with a 40th minute penalty but

the top two finishers in each of the seven groups progress to the finals being staged from Jan. 13 to Feb. 3 next year. Hosts South Africa and holders Nigeria qualify automatically.

Madrid's lead strengthened

MADRID (AP) — Real Madrid saw its hold at the top of the Spanish First Division strengthened Sunday with No. 2 Deportivo de la Coruna only managing a 2-2 draw at home against middle-ranking Oviedo.

The left half Madrid, which defeated Valencia 3-1 on Saturday, with 46 points, seven more than Deportivo and eight over No. 3 Barcelona, which defeated Valladolid 4-1.

Spanish international striker Julio Salinas scored first for Deportivo in the 36th minute with Brazilian ace Bebeto netting the second three minutes later.

But Oviedo bounced back in the opening moments of the second half with a goal by Oliverio "Oli" Alvarez Gonzalez while Croatia Robert Prosinecki made it 2-2 in the 85th minute.

Barcelona 4, Valladolid 1: In Barcelona, Dutch coach Johan Cruyff's son, Jordi, scored two of the goals in the home side's 4-1 victory over lowly Valladolid. Cruyff netted the first in the eight minute while Aitor Beguiristain made it 2-0 four minutes before half-time.

Barcelona 4, Valladolid 1: In Barcelona, Dutch coach Johan Cruyff's son, Jordi, scored two of the goals in the home side's 4-1 victory over lowly Valladolid. Cruyff netted the first in the eight minute while Aitor Beguiristain made it 2-0 four minutes before half-time.

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1. A contract No. 3/95
2. Cost of tender document: JD 10 (non-refundable).
3. Deadline for purchasing document 12:30 p.m. on 27/4/1995.
4. Deadline for submitting proposals 11:00 a.m. on 15/5/1995.
5. Invited parties should contact the accountant section at the Ministry of Tourism to purchase tender document.

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TIM ROBBINS

ROBERT ALTMAN
PRET-A-PORTR

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA HIRSH

WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 98652 ♠ K103 ♣ KJ10 ♠ AQ
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
2 NT Pass 2 ♠ Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.2—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 98652 ♠ K103 ♣ KJ10 ♠ AQ
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
Pass Pass Pass 1 ♠
Pass 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠
What do you bid now?

Q.3—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 98652 ♠ K103 ♣ KJ10 ♠ AQ
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
Pass Pass Pass 1 ♠
Pass 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠
What do you bid now?

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 98652 ♠ K103 ♣ KJ10 ♠ AQ
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
Pass Pass Pass 1 ♠
Pass 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠
What do you bid now?

Q.5—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 98652 ♠ K103 ♣ KJ10 ♠ AQ
Partner opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you respond?

Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 98652 ♠ K103 ♣ KJ10 ♠ AQ
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one heart. What action do you take?

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

Cinema	Tel: 634144	Cinema	Tel: 699238	Cinema	Tel: 674230	Tel: 618274 - 618275	Tel: 675571	Tel: 624230
PHILADELPHIA		PLAZA		CONCORD		AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabli Al Mashini Theatre	ANILAN THEATRE
Jeff Bridges & Tommy Lee Jones in Blown Away Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Kim Basinger, Julia Roberts, Sophia Loren PRET - A - PORTER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		CONCORD "1" Baby's Day Out Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" Bad Girls Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:30, 11		Musa Hijazin "Sum'a" Hi Citizen written and directed by Mohammad Al Shawarfa daily on 8:30 p.m. The theatre closes on Monday — Hafa Al Agha in the children's play —★ Sa'd's Return ★—	COMING SOON The Comedy Show CABARET	Presents: The political satire: AL SALAM YA SALAM at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed Saturdays & Sundays

MAN TIMES, TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 1995

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Please call for appointments...
Tel. 864799 8200...
from 9:00 am until 6:00 pm

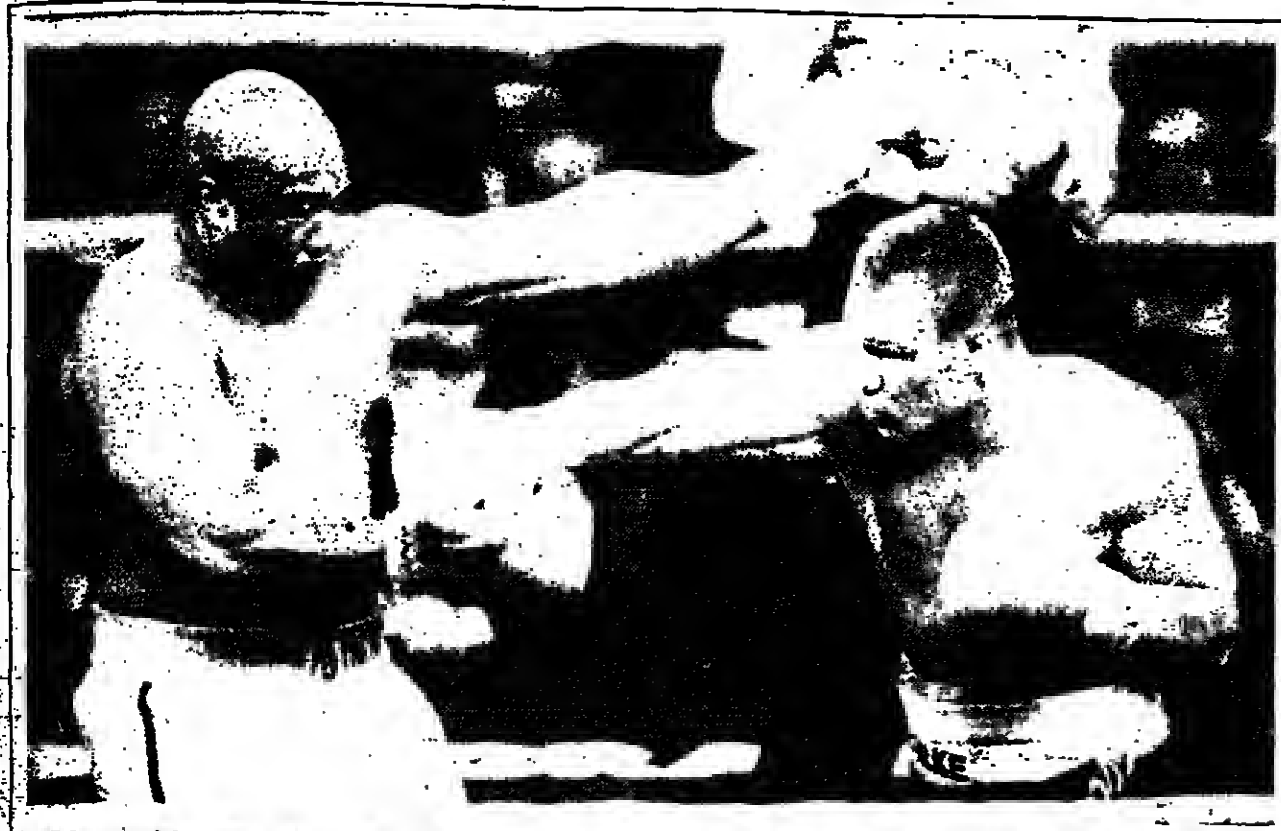
GOREN BROS

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10:30

Mad & Hassan's
ANILAN THEATRE
Presents:
AL SALAM YA SALAM
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The theatre is closed Saturdays & Sundays



IBF heavyweight champion George Foreman of the U.S. (left) pulls back after taking a right from challenger Axel Schulz of Germany in their bout at the MGM Grand Garden in Las Vegas. Foreman held on to the title on a majority decision (AFP photo)

Jordan Open begins

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The first round of the 1995 Jordan Open Tennis Championship begins at Al Hussein Youth City Tuesday with over 58 players taking part.

The Kingdom's top players will be competing, led by 1993 champion and current top-ranked player Imad Abu Hamda who led Jordan's team in the just-concluded Davis Cup.

Last year's champion, Laith Al Azzouni, has opted not to compete as he is busy with his Tawjihi studies. Also surprisingly missing the competition will be his brother Faris, another Davis Cup player.

A host of promising younger participants will be fighting for the title including Tharwat Al Qaisi, Iyad Al Hadid, Khaled Nafa' and Ihab Shehadeb. Fifteen Under-12 players will also be playing in a competition of their own.

National Team coach Yousef Oreibi pointed out that the competition will be a good chance to see the competitive level of the players and choose a new national team in preparation for upcoming competitions.

"We will seek to name a new national team, that will train throughout the year and be ready for any competition," Oreibi said.

Spain breezes past Maleeva sisters

NEW YORK (AP) — The Fed Cup's format may have changed. The results haven't.

Spain, with two of the top four ranked players on the WTA Tour, breezed to an opening day lead over Bulgaria, with Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and Conchita Martinez sweeping past the Maleeva sisters in straight sets.

Whether a best-of-three, one-week tournament or a best-of-five event staged at venues all over the world throughout the year like the Davis Cup, the defending champions are dominant.

Sanchez Vicario, ranked No. 2, used her powerful ground strokes to beat 26-year-old Katerina Maleeva 6-3, 6-3 and then Martinez routed Katerina's 20-year-old sister Magdalena 6-2, 6-4.

The new format, initiated this year under the named shortened form its predecessor — the Federation Cup, teams play singles on the first day and then reverse singles and doubles on the second day.

While some players have expressed a desire to play more of a Davis Cup-like schedule with the doubles in the middle, all of the singles are played first to essentially favour the European nations, which concentrate on singles.

The top group, like the Davis Cup, is called the World Group, with Group One a second tier.

In other matches, in the World Group, South Africa and France were tied 2-2 with doubles remaining to be played; and Germany led Japan 2-0. United States was at home against Austria.

In Group One, Canada took a 2-0 lead over Italy; the Dutch led Sweden 2-0, Argentina and Indonesia split

1-1, and Australia was even with Slovakia 1-1.

In Sofia, the 23-year-old Martinez needed 90 minutes to defeat the youngest of the three teetotal-playing Maleeva sisters.

After an easy first set, Martinez quickly seized a 3-0 lead in the second set. The struggle wasn't over yet and the ninth-ranked Magdalena Maleeva squeezed the difference to 5-4, but lost concentration and the last game to Martinez.

Fed Cup

Germany 2, Japan 0: At Freiburg, Germany, Anke Huber beat Kyoko Nagatsuka 6-0, 5-7, 6-4 to give Germany the lead, and Sabine Hack followed with a 6-4, 7-6 (7-5) victory over Mana Endo. Both teams were without their top players, Germany's Steffi Graf, the No. 1 in the world, skipped the match to attend her brother's wedding, while Japan's Kimiko Date pulled out of the singles for unspecified "health reasons."

France 2, South Africa 2: At Metz, France, Amanda Coetzer upset Mary Pierce, 6-4, 6-3 in the first match of the day to give South Africa a 2-1 lead. But France's Julie Halard fought back to level the score by beating Joanne Kruger, 6-4, 7-5.

It was Coetzer's second singles win. She beat Halard, 6-2, 6-4.

In the doubles, Halard and Nathalie Tauziat faced Coetzer and Elena Reinach.

Group One: Australia 1, Slovakia 1: At Perth, Australia, Nicole Bradtke rallied to defeat Radka Zrubakova in 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 to give Australia the split

World Youth Soccer Championship

Portugal take on Brazil, Argentina meet Spain in semifinals today

DOHA (Agencies) — Portugal will play Brazil and Argentina will meet Spain in two all-Latin semifinals in the World Youth Championship on Tuesday.

In the two remaining quarterfinals played on Sunday Portugal beat Australia 2-1 in sudden-death extra-time and Argentina beat Cameroon 2-0.

Earlier on Sunday Spain beat Russia 4-1 while Brazil came back from a goal down to beat Japan 2-1.

Portugal clinched their victory over Australia when man of the match Agostinho Ribeiro was sent clear by Dani Carvalho to score after nine minutes of the extra period.

Ribeiro checked back inside a defender and slotted the ball under the body of Australia goalkeeper Clint Bolton.

Argentina reached the last four with a 2-0 win over favourites Cameroon, who had been strongly tipped to win the title.

But they were outplayed by the more experienced South Americans who won with goals from Francisco Guerrero and Walter Coyote.

Portugal took the lead against Australia after 65 minutes when nippy striker Guerrero scored after 37 minutes when Ariel Itagaza slipped the ball through a wide gap in the Cameroon defence.

The second came when Walter Coyote dribbled his way into the penalty area and glided past keeper Hameni Njeukam.

FIFA assured of clean Youth Cup in 1997

The Football Association of Malaysia has assured soccer's ruling body that it will do its best to eradicate match-fixing and bribery before hosting the World Youth Cup in 1997, a newspaper reported Saturday.

The tournament, now being held in Doha, Qatar, was hit by scandal this week when three Malaysians were arrested for attempting to bribe soccer players to fix results predetermined by bookies.

The Malaysians are to be deported along with a Thai and an Indonesian who also were arrested at the same time.

FAM deputy president Abdullah Ahmad Shah assured FIFA that it would seek the help of the Asian Football Confederation to help stamp out bookies, the Star newspaper said.

Bribery and match fixing are common in Malaysia. Earlier this week 57 players and an assistant coach were banned from soccer worldwide for periods ranging from one to four years after they confessed to rigging the scores of games.

Another 22 players and coaches have been banished to live in remote areas and can't move about without police permit.

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According to Mr. Abu Shagra, the person who discovered it had observed that two different roses growing next to each other affect each other in form and essence, thus creating some kind of unity and a new character and a new scent which he chose to call True Love.

True Love is really the essence of the fragrance of more than one rose blended together into one.

The apex of this scent blends together those wonderful fragrances of the lily of the valley and the white cloud rose, which together produce a pleasant feeling for the youth at the heart of the new scent one can feel. The effects of jasmine, lotus, lily of the valley and the legendary narcissus; and as background, one is influenced by the fragrance of sandal wood, orchard grass and musk.

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(new department opening date 1/6/1995)

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Finance Director

The Opportunity

In order to strengthen the ability of Jordan's telecommunications sector to deliver a top quality range of services to the people and businesses of Jordan, a programme of reconstruction of the sector is currently in progress. The major part of this programme is the commercialisation of the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC).

The Vacancy

We are seeking candidates for the post of Finance Director in TCC. The post reports to the Director General and carries full responsibility for all financial & commercial accounting activities including aggressive treasury management and the development of effective budgeting techniques. As a member of the Top Management Team, the person will also contribute to the general management of TCC. The post is based in Amman, but some travel will be necessary.

You, the Candidate

You must be educated to degree standard and hold a recognised professional accounting qualification. You must be accustomed to managing the full range of financial analysis and reporting activities, and will have held a senior financial post in a large private sector company, preferably in a technological or engineering sector (ideally, though not necessarily, telecommunications). You will understand and be familiar with the specification and implementation of modern computerised accounting systems. Also, you must be accustomed to using desktop computers with spreadsheets and financial modelling software. Fluency in English and Arabic (written and spoken) is essential. Your age is less important to us than your maturity and the quality of your experience.

Salary

The salary will be negotiable and reflect the experience and qualifications of the successful applicant.

To Apply

You should send a full and up-to-date CV with covering letter (in English) to the address below indicating your strengths in relation to the post as described, and stating your current salary and benefits. If short listed, you will be invited for interview at the offices of TCC near 3rd Circle. If you are unsuccessful for this post, we may also consider you for other vacancies in TCC, unless you ask us not to do so.

We wish to make an early appointment so your application should arrive by 2 May at the latest

Director General Telecommunications Corporation
PO Box 1689 Amman Jordan
(Finance Director)

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Jospin, Chirac move to runoff

PARIS (Agencies) — French voters drove the prime minister from the presidential race, supported the far right in record numbers and chose a socialist and conservative to compete in a runoff to become head of state.

The results of Sunday's election upset most predictions. Jacques Chirac, the conservative mayor of Paris, had been the favourite. Fellow conservative Premier Edouard Balladur was expected to battle socialist Lionel Jospin for second place and a spot on the May 7 runoff ballot.

Instead, Mr. Chirac struggled to a disappointing 20.5 per cent showing, second behind Mr. Jospin's 23.2 per cent. With all except overseas votes counted, Mr. Balladur came in third with 18.5 per cent and was knocked out of the race.

The five right-of-centre candidates in the nine-person field drew almost 60 per cent of the vote, ensuring that Mr. Chirac will be a solid favourite in the runoff to replace President Francois Mitterrand, in office since 1981.

Mr. Mitterrand, 78, gave only lukewarm backing to Mr. Jospin, but this may have helped the candidate avoid being seen as a simple continuation of a now-uninspired administration.

"Hope has switched sides," Mr. Jospin told elated supporters at his headquarters. The outcome could mean the end of Mr. Balladur's political career. He was the heavy favourite until February, but proved an ineffectual campaigner and was dogged by dismal figures on unemployment, which grew from 10.5 per cent when he became premier two years ago to 12.6 per cent last December.

Mr. Balladur on Sunday urged his followers to back Mr. Chirac in the second round.

The divided right "can reassemble and go forward together," Mr. Chirac said. "Let's forget our partisan divisions and build a France for everyone."

Far-right candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen became a potential kingmaker by finishing a strong fourth with 15 per cent. He said he would wait a

week before advising endorsing one of the runoff candidates.

Mr. Le Pen, leader of the anti-immigrant National Front, surpassed his party's best previous showing of 14.4 per cent in 1988.

"The country is perhaps a little sick," Philippe Douste-Blazy, the pro-Balladur health minister, said of the support for far-right candidates.

In addition to Mr. Le Pen's strong showing, another right-wing nationalist, Philippe de Villiers, won almost five per cent, while communist and Trotskyite candidates together won about 14 per cent.

On paper, a rough 60-40 per cent lead for the right over the left made Mr. Chirac the clear favourite to win the runoff. But analysts, wary of opinion polls which wrongly forecast that Mr. Chirac would easily win the first round, warned that tricky alliances would make the duel a close fight.

"Surveys forecasting a 57-43 per cent lead (for Chirac) look like nonsense. I believe we are headed for a very, very close second round," TFI television commentator Gerard Carreyrou said.

As Mr. Jospin prepared to embark on a fresh series of rallies, his supporters said his victory, something he had previously ruled out in private, was now a distinct possibility.

Radio Luxembourg said Mr. Chirac and Mr. Jospin may hold a crucial television debate on May 2.

Mr. Chirac, putting behind him a bruising campaign duel, telephoned Mr. Balladur to thank him for his support and call for reconciliation to take the Elysee Palace out of socialist hands after Mr. Mitterrand's 14-year rule.

"Jacques Chirac told Edouard Balladur that he wanted, like him, the widest possible unity of forces who refuse a third socialist seven-year term," his spokesman Francois Baroin said.

He said Mr. Chirac revived his campaign machine to convince all parliamentarians in the ruling centre-right coalition and supporters of defeated right-wing candidates to work for him.



Lionel Jospin



Jacques Chirac

U.S. seeking to extend ban on Iran oil — MEES

NICOSIA (AFP) — The U.S. administration is close to drawing up a draft executive order banning U.S. firms from buying, refining or trading in Iranian oil anywhere in the world, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) said Monday.

The draft order "which would significantly extend the scope of the U.S. economic sanctions against Iran is in the final stages of review at the White House," the Cyprus-based weekly said.

It would apply to all U.S. companies and their overseas affiliates and allow a 90-day transition period for firms to find alternative suppliers, it said, quoting unnamed sources.

"The whole operation would still be likely to generate a major disruption in the oil market, particularly if Washington also succeeded in pressuring Japan to stop its companies from buying Iranian oil."

But in Tehran the Liberation Movement of Iran, one of the rare Iranian opposition groups which is tolerated by the state, warned the United States against stepping up its economic sanctions on the country.

"Boosting the sanctions as proposed by the American parliamentarians greatly oversteps the fight against the Iranian government to become a hostility towards the Iranian people," said Ibrahim Yazdi, the new secretary general of the LMI.

He told AFP in Tehran

that "the Iranian people are very worried by the consequences of such plans on the population and on the country's integrity."

And he warned that the "population will resist all external efforts and threats."

U.S. President Bill Clinton last month issued an executive order banning U.S. firms from developing Iran's oil and gas fields leading to the cancellation of a one-billion-dollar deal between the National Iranian Oil Company and the U.S. firm Conoco.

Existing sanctions already prohibit imports of Iranian oil into the United States.

If a U.S. embargo goes ahead "some 400,000 to 600,000 barrels per day (bpd) of Iranian crude would be looking for a home — and if Japan were to join in, the figure could rise to around a million bpd."

Prices, already depressed, could rally initially but there would be a tendency to a drop in the market "if the operation resulted in a net increase in the volume of supply."

It would be a "marketeer's nightmare, driven more by U.S. domestic politics than the logic of the market," MEES added.

Washington has pressured countries such as Japan and Russia to halt cooperation with the Islamic republic, which it accuses of supporting "terrorism" and seeking a nuclear capability. Tehran has denied both charges.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Monday meets with U.S. Deputy Secretary of Commerce David Barram in a meeting attended by Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb (photo by Yusef Allan)

Crown Prince, Barram discuss U.S.-Jordan economic relations

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan met Monday with David Barram, deputy U.S. secretary of commerce, and reviewed with him scopes for economic and trade cooperation between Jordan and the United States.

The two sides also discussed ideas and projects for the development of the Jordan Rift Valley and the main topics being discussed at an Amman meeting that is preparing the ground for the Middle East and North Africa summit due to be held in Amman in October.

Mr. Barram voiced his country's appreciation of Jordan's approach towards regional cooperation in economic fields and towards achieving a comprehensive development in the Middle East.

The meeting was attended by Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb and Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irshaidat.

U.S. commitment Mr. Barram said Monday

the Clinton administration is fully committed to supporting the economic development of Jordan and the Middle East and the convening of a three-day symposium on developing the Jordan Rift Valley in Amman is the most vivid evidence of that commitment.

Mr. Barram, who is attending the symposium, which groups more than 250 participants representing Jordanian, Israeli and American governments as well as the private sectors in the three countries, said the administration was extending all encouragement to American firms to invest in the Jordan Rift Valley and do business with Jordan.

"America stands with you," said Mr. Barram, addressing a luncheon meeting as part of the symposium, which he described as only one step in the efforts to stimulate and cater to private sector interest in the development of the region.

The official noted that Secretary of Commerce

Ronald Brown paid three visits to the Middle East leading high-level American delegations exploring business and investment opportunities.

"American firms are eager to do business here," said Mr. Barram.

The deputy secretary said the U.S. was determined to make a success of the Middle East and North Africa summit scheduled to be held in Amman in October. The summit, he said, could be the "perfect stage to unveil a new Middle East."

Later, in comments to the local media, he said it might take some time before the people could feel the actual economic benefits of peace but it was the responsibility of the governments concerned to expose the opportunities available in the region to the private sector and offer every encouragement.

"The leadership has to show people where to go," he said. "It is a real challenge... you have to show the private sector what can be..."

Coalition plans anti-normalisation meeting despite governor's refusal

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Eleven opposition parties will "continue steps to hold the national Jordanian conference to protect the homeland and fight normalisation" despite a government refusal to allow the holding of the gathering, a preparatory committee for the conference said Monday.

The committee said in a statement that it will also pursue the case with the judiciary on the basis of the alleged government "abuse of the public meetings law as well as the violation of this law."

The committee postponed till a date it did not specify the convening of the conference which was originally set for April 27, saying the gathering will take place once all the necessary measures to ensure its success are taken.

The committee lashed at the government for allegedly denying the opposition parties "their constitutional right to the freedom of expression through legal means..." and for insisting on monopolising the right for making public policies...

While the Islamists reject peace with Israel on ideological grounds, most leftists and pan-Arabist parties say normalisation should not start before Israel has withdrawn from all occupied Arab territories.

The committee said in the

statement that the governor has refused to explain the legal requirements that the request does not meet, informing it that the idea for the conference was completely rejected.

The parties said they had requested a meeting with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker to discuss the issue but the meeting has not taken place yet.

The statement severely criticised what it called the hasty normalisation of ties with Israel at a time when Israel is still occupying Arab lands and when "violation of public freedoms and democracy to curb (opposition to the peace treaty with Israel) are increasing."

Opposition parties, which include Islamists, pan-Arabists and leftists, vowed to fight normalisation with Israel even before the Oct. 26 peace treaty with Israel was concluded.

While the Islamists reject peace with Israel on ideological grounds, most leftists and pan-Arabist parties say normalisation should not start before Israel has withdrawn from all occupied Arab territories.

The committee said in the

Sudan-Uganda row worsens

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan said it was not surprised by Uganda's decision to break diplomatic relations and announced Kampala of supporting separatist Sudanese rebels.

In a statement issued on Sunday night, the Sudanese Foreign Ministry also rejected Uganda accusations that its military attaché in Kampala was storing weapons at his residence.

The statement said Khartoum's government was ready to accept the searching of the attaché's residence in the presence of the dean of the diplomatic representatives in Kampala to prove that there were no arms inside.

More than 50 Ugandan soldiers surrounded the attaché's residence on Friday to force him to hand over the alleged weapons.

The government-owned Al Inqaz Al Watani newspaper reported on Monday that the military attaché, Hayder Al Hadi Omer, and his deputy have arrived in Khartoum on Sunday. It added that six other diplomats are expected to arrive on Monday.

Britain says talks with Sinn Fein to go ahead

LONDON (AP) — Negotiations about disarming the Irish Republican Army will begin soon, Britain announced Monday, breaking months of deadlock in the search for a Northern Ireland settlement.

The announcement indicated a meeting was imminent between the Irish Republican Army (IRA)-allied Sinn Fein party and Michael Ancram, the second-ranking figure in Britain's Northern Ireland Office.

It would be the first ministerial-level meeting between Britain and Sinn Fein, which helped engineer the IRA's Sept. 1 ceasefire. Until now talks had involved British civil servants only.

When Mr. Ancram meets Sinn Fein, the Northern Ireland office said, "there will first need to be a substantive discussion... on decommissioning of arms, including an exploration of the specific ways this can best be achieved."

The breakthrough followed several weeks of contacts by letter and phone between Britain's senior civil servant in Northern Ireland,

Quentin Thomas, and Sinn Fein deputy leader Martin McGuinness, a reported former IRA commander.

Sinn Fein headquarters in Dublin said it has offered Britain no firm promise to "decommission" its side's weaponry.

"Decommissioning" means the surrender or destruction of guns, bullets, explosive and weapons-making equipment, most of which the IRA has hidden south of the border from British-ruled Northern Ireland.

Sinn Fein said the party's formal response would come from Mr. McGuinness later Monday.

Sinn Fein, which grew as a political force in Roman Catholic parts of Northern Ireland following the IRA prison hunger strikes of 1981, has insisted it has no authority to negotiate about its side's arsenal.

Islamic Jihad sets terms to end attacks

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the militant Islamic Jihad reported progress Monday in talks aimed at halting attacks on Israelis which are threatening the expansion of autonomy.

However, the largest Islamic opposition group, Hamas, vowed to "continue the resistance and holy war against the Zionist occupation."

The PLO led Palestinian National Authority (PNA) on Monday freed 20 militants rounded up after a double suicide bombing and authorised the publication of an opposition newspaper, Palestinian sources said.

Police said that members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad arrested after the bombing in the Gaza Strip which killed eight people on April 9 had been freed for lack of evidence.

They refused to say how many, but Palestinian sources put the figure at 20.

More than 100 militants have now been released since PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat ordered a crackdown on hardliners which netted up to 200 people.

Meanwhile, the Democra-

tic Front for the Liberation of Palestine said that it had received permission from PNA to publish a newspaper.

Central committee member Jawdat Swareki said that Mr. Arafat had given the greenlight at a meeting on Friday night.

Janiariyya (the republic) will be edited by another central committee official, Nihad Abu Ghosh, and will campaign against the Oslo autonomy accord.

It is the third opposition newspaper to be authorised by the self-rule authority following Hamas' Al Watan and Islamic Jihad's Istiklal.

Tayeh Abdul Rahim, a senior aide to Mr. Arafat, headed a PLO team that met for 90 minutes Monday with top figures in the Islamic Jihad.

"The meeting was positive, productive and serious, and we are progressing," said Mr. Abdul Rahim, who announced that a senior Islamic Jihad activist, Dr. Mohammad Al Hindi, was being released from jail.

"It is positive, and we ask God to help us," said Sheikh Nafez Azzam, a cleric who represented Islamic Jihad.

(Continued on page 7)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Man killed in Beirut church shooting

BEIRUT (AP) — A man shot dead his estranged wife's lover and wounded her in a church early Monday morning shortly before worshippers gathered for Orthodox Easter mass, police sources reported. They said the gunman, Elias Habr, fled and was being hunted by police. The suspect, who is in his 50s, walked into the St. Nicolas Orthodox church at 7:30 a.m. (0430 GMT), about 90 minutes before scheduled mass on the second day of the Orthodox Easter, the sources said. He pumped five bullets from a 9-mm pistol into Abdo Haddad and two into his wife, Samia Habr. Haddad, 47, was hit in the head, chest and abdomen, sources at the nearby St. George Hospital said. The woman, in her 40s, had superficial head wounds. Police said the woman had been living with Haddad, who was divorced, while her own divorce from Habr, a former militiaman during the 1975-90 civil war, was being finalised.

UAE introduces death for drug-trafficking

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) cabinet on Monday adopted the death penalty for drug-traffickers and ordered prison terms of at least four years for users, the official agency WAM said. UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan said in March that sentences handed out by courts for drugs cases "are not dissuasive or effective in fighting the plague which has particularly hit our young people." The tougher penalties were passed at a cabinet meeting. The government had already recommended harsher punishment for drug-trafficking in 1992 after it reached alarming proportions. Since then death sentences have been handed out in "exceptional cases" in anticipation of the new law, a justice ministry spokesman told AFP.

Gunmen steal \$1m in New York heist

NEW YORK (R) — Two gunmen tied up five women working for a New York armored car company early on Monday and made off with about \$1 million in cash, police said. "The women were tied up for about 45 minutes to an hour," before one of them freed herself and activated an alarm. Arek Taril, a police spokesman said. The two men entered the office of Trans Am Security in the Borough of Queens about 1:30 a.m. (EDT). The firm transports money from companies to banks. "The company approximates about \$1 million was taken but they have not officially counted what was taken," Mr. Taril said. The five women were not injured, police said.

Niger government, Tuaregs sign truce

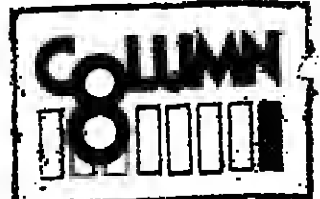
NIAMEY (AFP) — The Niger government and Tuareg rebels signed a peace accord here Monday putting an end to a nearly three-year conflict that claimed 150 lives and exacerbated an economic, social and political crisis. The agreement which was mediated by Algeria, Burkina Faso and France had been drawn up in Ouagadougou earlier this month. It provides for a decentralised regime giving the Tuaregs more autonomy in their northern home region. The text formally ending the conflict fought between November 1991 and September 1994 was signed by leading negotiators Mai Maigana for the government and by Rissa ag Boulia for the rebels. Representatives of the mediating states also linked the agreement in a ceremony that was broadcast nationally. Niger head of state Mahamane Ousmane, Prime Minister Hama Amadou and Parliamentary Speaker Mahamadou Issoufou attended the signing.

French cardinal walks into Israeli storm

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, archbishop of Paris and a converted Jew, arrived in Israel on Monday amid a storm over his invitation to the country. Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein agreed Monday with Chief Rabbi Israel Meir Lau and management at the Holocaust memorial, that Card. Lustiger should not be invited to attend the official Holocaust day commemoration on Wednesday evening. Mr. Rubinstein told journalists that Card. Lustiger could pay a private visit to the memorial "the same as any one else." Card. Lustiger told reporters at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport: "I refuse to be drawn into an argument."

Councils to be directly elected in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — The Iranian parliament has passed a law allowing local councils to be directly elected after years of bitter debate between the government and hardline deputies. The first municipal elections are to take place within a year after the law, passed Sunday, is ratified by the council for the protection of the constitution. Elections to "Islamic councils" in charge of towns were laid down in the Iranian constitution after the 1979 Islamic revolution. But they remained a dead letter, principally because of a dispute over how the towns' mayors should be appointed. They are currently appointed by regional prefects or, in the case of the capital Tehran, by the Interior Ministry. The government argued that the mayors should be directly elected, while Islamic hardliners who hold sway in parliament feared that this would give them too much power. Parliament's view appears to have prevailed in the new law, which gives municipal councils power to hire and fire their mayor.



Diana visits the sick and troubled

HONG KONG (AP) — Britain's Diana visited cancer patients and troubled teenagers and said the tour gave her "new perspectives of her own difficulties," according to someone who accompanied her. Princess Diana's tour of the Pamela Youd Nethersole Eastern Hospital and the Youth Outreach Centre for Runaway Teenagers came on the second day of her three-day visit to the British colony, which reverts to Chinese sovereignty in 1997. At the hospital, the Princess listened attentively to cancer patients when the told her of their disease, said Cheng Chik-Wan, 52, who suffers from throat cancer and speaks with some difficulty. Y.S. Fung, a member of a cancer support group, said the princess told the head of the Hong Kong Cancer Fund, Sally Lo, when she was leaving that the visit "gave her new perspective on her own difficulties and she hoped to bring back home this experience." Princess Diana, the estranged wife of Prince Charles, received a T-shirt and an autographed greeting card as souvenirs when she toured the Youth Outreach Centre, which houses 31 teenagers. Wearing a deep blue jacket and a matching skirt, the princess appeared relaxed, said Georgina Li, an official at the centre. "She is friendly and is not afraid of meeting people not from her class," she said. Cecilia Wan, 55, waited outside the hospital for more than an hour just to take a glance of the princess. "She looks charming and attractive. She is the idol of many women," she said. The princess last visited Hong Kong in 1989 with Prince Charles. She is known for efforts on behalf of the sick and underprivileged and sits on the boards of a number of humanitarian organisations in Britain.

Man kills self in Russian roulette birthday game

THIONVILLE, France (AFP) — A man killed himself with a bullet through the head in a drunken game of Russian roulette after celebrating his 42nd birthday, police in this eastern French town said Monday. The man, Franck Deidda, shot himself in the head after a night in the town in Hayange, a village in the Moselle region of eastern France, according to a witness who was present at the time. The witness told police that Deidda took him back to the pizzeria where he worked after an evening's drinking, took out a gun and began playing the do-or-die game. He placed the gun against the temple of the witness and pulled the trigger, but nothing happened. He then pointed the gun at the door and pulled the trigger once more before placing the gun to his head and firing the fatal shot.

Treasure trove of World War II fighters found off Australia

MELBOURNE, Australia (AFP) — An Australian aviation company has located an underwater treasure trove of World War II aircraft off the Queensland coast but poachers threaten it, a parliamentarian said Monday. Local federal MP Alan Griffiths said that more than 1,000 fighters planes including vintage U.S. Air Force Corsairs, Hellcats and Avengers, were dumped about 30 metres (100 feet) down in waters some 50 kilometres (30 miles) off Maroochydore after World War II in 1945-46. Aviation salvage expert Don Dennis said that once restored the aircraft could be sold for around 150,000 Australian dollars (\$111,000) a piece. "There are not many of these planes around," Mr. Dennis said. Local fisherman found the war surplus treasure 18 months ago off the Queensland coast north of Brisbane. "This is probably the most significant discovery of aviation history since World War II. We don't want international poachers, and that appears to be what they are gearing up for," Mr. Griffiths told a press conference.

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